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CEREBUS

AFTER 28 DAYS

ISSN 0712-7774

293
AUG

Dear Milo

Milo George
The Comics Journal

Dear Milo:

First of all, thanks for actually printing our two letters as I requested. I've gotten so used to requests like that being ignored that I actually had my letter to you ready to go in this space in issue 293 under the headline, "No Reply (Naturally)". I'd appreciate it if you could run this letter to yourself as well as the responses below. I hadn't really expected that they would be run as "open letters" ["Dear Dave: A Blood & Thunder Special"—*Comics Journal* 253, June 03] that is, as necessitating my own response (my impression was that they would just be particularly long "Blood & Thunder" entries a special "bonus prize" for the *Journal* readership's most ardent Sim haters).

The reason that I told both Jack and Allen that they should try the *Comics Journal* was a) they both obviously put a lot of time and effort into their letters and it would be a shame if they didn't run intact somewhere, b) you guys do have your anti-Sim agenda and c) the *Journal* is the only Marxist (in the same sense that I'm a concentration camp commander, *jawohl, mein herr*?) publication that I could think of that would fit the bill. "Blood & Thunder" usually combines the worst elements of the letters pages of *Dissent* and *Commentary* back in the 60s and 70s—which Jules Feiffer characterized, I think appropriately, as "a joke" [see "Why Canada Slept," this issue], Jack's being of the hair-splitting "how many apparatchiks can dance on the head of a pin" variety of leftist "debate" and Allen's of the needlessly personal and malicious sort—pugilism for pacifists. If that's really what you think is worth discussing and the way it should be discussed in this day and age (the Berlin Wall came down fourteen years ago, fellas) and you can sell enough of them to keep going, hey, more power to you. But, I'm afraid this will be it for my participation in both "debates" in your pages.

Thanks again for your kind words, Milo, and do thank Gary for continuing to send me the magazine for free. I'm not sure I would pay much more than that, but for what it's costing me, it's not a bad read. Actually, I would've paid cover price for the Stan Drake "Juliet Jones" and Raymond "Rip Kirby" strips in R.C. Harvey's "Critical Focus" alone . They were gorgeous.

Interested *Cerebus* readers who missed the
"Dear Dave: Blood & Thunder Special" (how *could* you?)
can order a copy of *Comics Journal 253*
(and whichever issue my responses will run in) from
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NO. 293 AUGUST 2003

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LATTER DAYS
•
PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 266
and 267)
•
BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 268 to
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•
BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 289 to
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RUN THAT. BY CERBERUS.

AGAIN?

OH YES, SIR! WE'VE SENT THE RESOLUTION TO THE SANCTUARY SECURITY

SLOWER!

THIS TIME.

OH...uh... YES, SIR.

WE'VE SENT THE RESOLUTION--

--UNITED SANCTUARIES RESOLUTION 1441--

"RESOLVED:"

"THIS COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE TEMPORARY LIFTING OF THE HEIGHTENED RED ALERT LOCKDOWN SO THAT THE GREAT CEREBUS' SON CAN VISIT HIM."

--TO EACH MEMBER OF THE FIFTEEN MEMBER SECURITY COUNCIL

UH-HUNH.

INCLUDING THE FIVE VETO-WIELDING PERMANENT MEMBERS.

UH-HUNH.

AND NOW WE'RE JUST WAITING TO FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF THE VOTE.

HATE MEN WOMEN

GAYS FOR THE JOANN

ARE. YOU. TELLING. CEREBUS

THAT CEREBUS' SON IS COMING TO VISIT CEREBUS. FOR THE FIRST. TIME. IN OVER. TEN. YEARS AND THIS. THIS?

UNITED SANCTUARIES SECURITY COUNCIL, SIR.

IS GOING TO VOTE. ON WHETHER OR NOT TO LET HIM?

UH YES, SIR.

WHOSE STUPID IDEA WAS THIS? THIS?

UNITED SANCTUARIES SECURITY COUNCIL? UH

IT WAS... YOURS... SIR

YOU APPROVED IT AS (QUOTE): "A COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION AMONG SOVEREIGN SANCTUARIES TO PREVENT MILITARY AGGRESSION AND TO ATTAIN PERMANENT PEACE WITH ORGANIZED JUSTICE IN A FREE WORLD" (UNQUOTE)

AYE? WELL
CEREBUS HAS CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT ALL THAT CRAP. YOU GO TELL THIS* THIS*
UNITED SANCTUARIES SECURITY COUNCIL, SIR.
"THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP BUT YOU ARE NOW O.FFICIALLY DIS.BANDED.
GOOD-BYE. GOOD LUCK. GET LOST."
I'M AFRAID SIR, THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE UNITED SANCTUARIES CHARTER THAT COULD ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY VOTE BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND ONLY IF NONE OF THE PERMANENT MEMBERS USES ITS VETO
IF YOU'D LIKE, SIR, I CAN DRAW THAT UP FOR YOU AS UNITED SANCTUARIES RESOLUTION #442.
RESTRICTED AREA
O'VERILY?
ER O'REILLY, SIR
O'REILLY?
YES SIR?
OPEN. THIS. DOOR.
KIAK

SIR, I CAN'T DO THAT, SIR. AS I EXPLAINED ALREADY WE'RE IN A HEIGHTENED CONDITION RED LOCKDOWN.

KLAK

KLAK

CEREBUS ORDERS YOU: IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD TO OPEN! THIS! DOOR!

KLAKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAKLA

SIR? ARE YOU INVOKING THE DIVINITY CLAUSE IN THE CHARTER, SIR?

Eh?

AYE CEREBUS IS INVOKING THE DIVINITY CLAUSE. NOW. OPEN. THE. STUPID. DOOR.

WELL, THAT'S SPLENDID SIR-- NOW, INSTEAD OF A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY ALL YOU NEED IS A SIMPLE FIFTY PERCENT PLUS ONE MAJORITY!

GREAT! NOW. OPEN. THE. DAMN.

KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK

SIR? YOU'LL BE VOTING IN FAVOUR OF THE RESOLUTION?

AYE! YES! OF COURSE!

THAT'S WONDERFUL, SIR! NOW ALL WE NEED ARE SEVEN-AND-A-HALF MORE VOTES AND YOUR SON CAN COME AND VISIT YOU!

O'TRULY?

KLAK KLAK KLAK

O'TRULY?

KLAKLAKLAK

COME BACK HERE AND OPEN. THIS. DOOR.

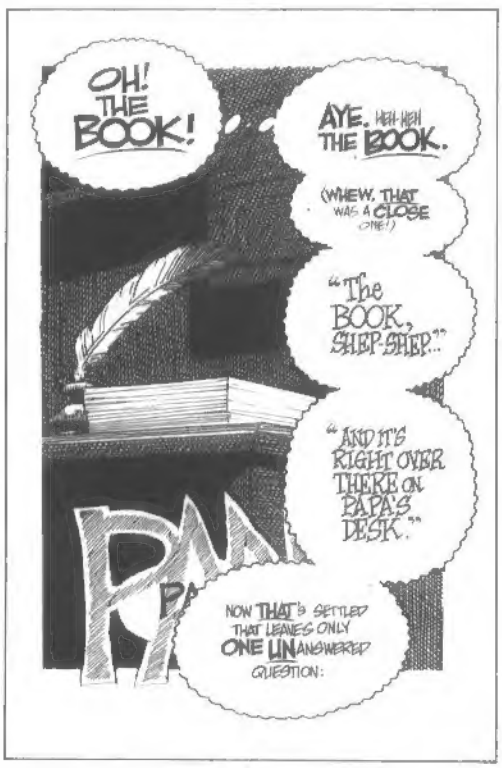
O'TRULY?!

KLAKKLAKLAK

THIS is AWFUL
(HOW did CEREBUS LET it COME TO THIS?)
(SANCTUARY SENIORITY COUNCIL... FSH.)
THEY HAVE TO LET SHEP-SHEP IN
THE FATE of the ENTIRE CHURCH HINGES ON WHAT CEREBUS HAS TO TELL HIM.
PANT
PANT
(MIND YOU, (CEREBUS CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT IS CEREBUS HAS TO TELL HIM, BUT...)
(HANG ON. THAT'S A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN CEREBUS IS MAKING IT SOUND LIKE IT IS.)

(WHAT IS?)
(CEREBUS NOT REMEMBERING WHAT IT IS HE HAS TO TELL SHEP-SHEP.)
(MM. GOOD POINT.)
(AYE.)
PANT
PANT
BIG PROBLEM.
HUGE. HUGE.
PROBLEM

WELL, NOW LET CEREBUS THINK ABOUT THAT
WHAT CEREBUS HAS TO TELL SHEP-SHEP IS:
(BYYY GUM)
"SHEP-SHEP? YOUR FATHER HAS TO TELL YOU:"
"WHAT YOUR FATHER HAS TO TELL YOU..."
"...SHEP-SHEP."
"IS."
"...A VERY... DEEP, DARK SECRET... SO YOU MUST LISTEN CLOSELY..."
"TO"
PANT
PANT
'TO'


OH! THE BOOK!
AYE. HEH-HEH THE BOOK.
(WHEW. THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE!)
"The BOOK, SHEP-SHEP..."
"AND IT'S RIGHT OVER THERE ON PAPA'S DESK."
NOW THAT'S SETTLED THAT LEAVES ONLY ONE UNANSWERED QUESTION:

Why.

is it.

AL WAYS.

so.

in

HERE

THINK GOD NOTICED THAT THIS TIME CEREBUS DIDN'T SAY "FUCKING HOT IN HERE"?

:PSST:

OH, AYE. HE'S AN OMNISCIENT BEING. CEREBUS IS PRETTY SURE HE WOULD'VE NOTICED RIGHT AWAY.

WHAT?

REALLY?

OH, AYE.

UNLESS...

UNLESS?

UNLESS CEREBUS RUPTURED GOD'S EARDRDRUMS BY YELLING LIKE THAT!

?

(BET GOD'S EARDRUMS ARE LIKE IRON.)

(SIGH. WE CAN ONLY HOPE)

CRINK.

TUMP.

CRINK.

CEREBUS HAS TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S GOING TO TELL SHEP. SHEP.

TUMP.

CRINK.

AYE... "WHAT."

TUM.

AND "HOW."

CRINK.

TUMP.

CRINK.

SOON... CEREBUS WILL BE GONE... AND THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE CHURCH WILL BE ON SHERSHEP'S SHOULDERS.

THE BOOK OF RICK.

THE BOOK OF CEREBUS.

CEREBUS' TORAH COMMENTARIES

TUMP.

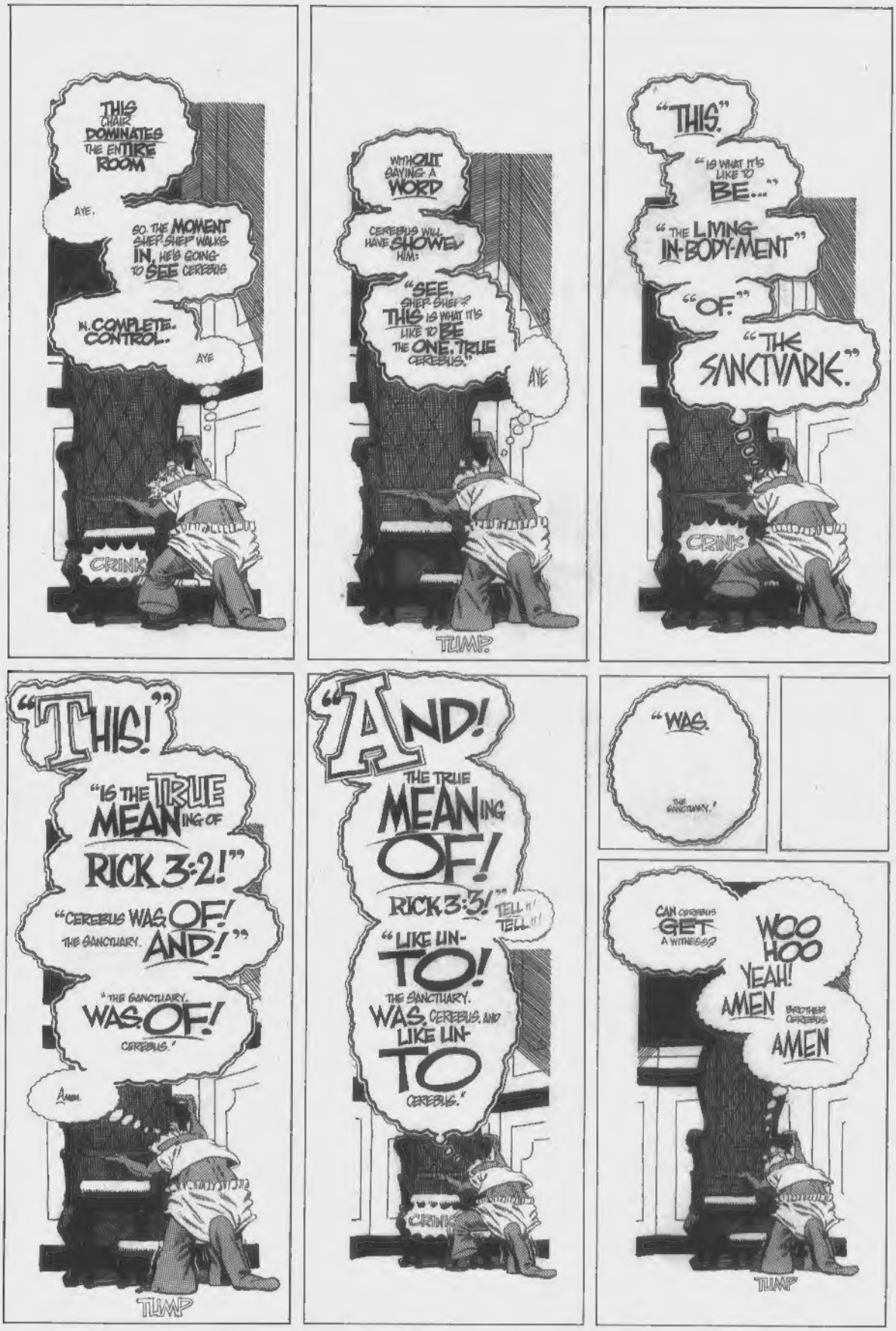
AND THE NEW BOOK ON CEREBUS' DESK

CRINK.

THAT'S WHY CEREBUS NEEDS TO BE SITTING IN THIS CHAIR

TUMP.

AYE.


THIS CHAIR DOMINATES THE ENTIRE ROOM
AYE.
SO. THE MOMENT SHEP SHEP WALKS IN, HE'S GOING TO SEE CERBERUS
IN COMPLETE CONTROL.
AYE
CRINK
WITHOUT SAYING A WORD
CERBERUS WILL HAVE SHOWED HIM:
"SEE, SHEP-SHEP? THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE THE ONE, TRUE CERBERUS."
AYE
TUMP
"THIS."
"IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE..."
"THE LIVING-IN-BODY-MENT"
"OF."
"THE SANCTUARY."
CRINK
"THIS!"
"IS THE TRUE MEANING OF RICK 3:2!"
"CERBERUS WAS OF! THE SANCTUARY. AND!"
"THE SANCTUARY. WAS OF! CERBERUS."
AMEN.
TUMP
"AND!
THE TRUE MEANING OF!
RICK 3:3!"
TELL IT! TELL IT!
"LIKE UN-TO!
THE SANCTUARY. WAS, CERBERUS, AND LIKE UN-TO
CERBERUS."
CRINK
"WAS.
THE SANCTUARY."
CAN CERBERUS GET A WITNESS?
WOO HOO
YEAH!
AMEN
BROTHER CERBERUS
AMEN
TUMP

EIGHT MORE FAILED "CRINKS" AND ONE SUCCESSFUL "TUMP" LATER ...

FOR THINE SHALL BE THE KINGDOM. SHEP SHEP

AND THINE SHALL BE THE POWER

AND THINE SHALL BE THE GLORY

"Beaucoup de" SIMILAR TEMPORAL HOGWASH AND MANY "NGGHs" LATER ...

AND ALL SHALL SEE THAT CEREBUS AND THE SON OF CEREBUS ARE

OF GOODNESS AND NOT OF EVILNESS

OF TRUTH AND NOT OF UNTRUTH

OF

ORDER

HIKE!

AND.
SMEK
SMEK
SMEK
NOT.
NGHHH
DIS
ORDER

AWwwwwww

CRAP

HOUSE KEEP-ING

WHAT

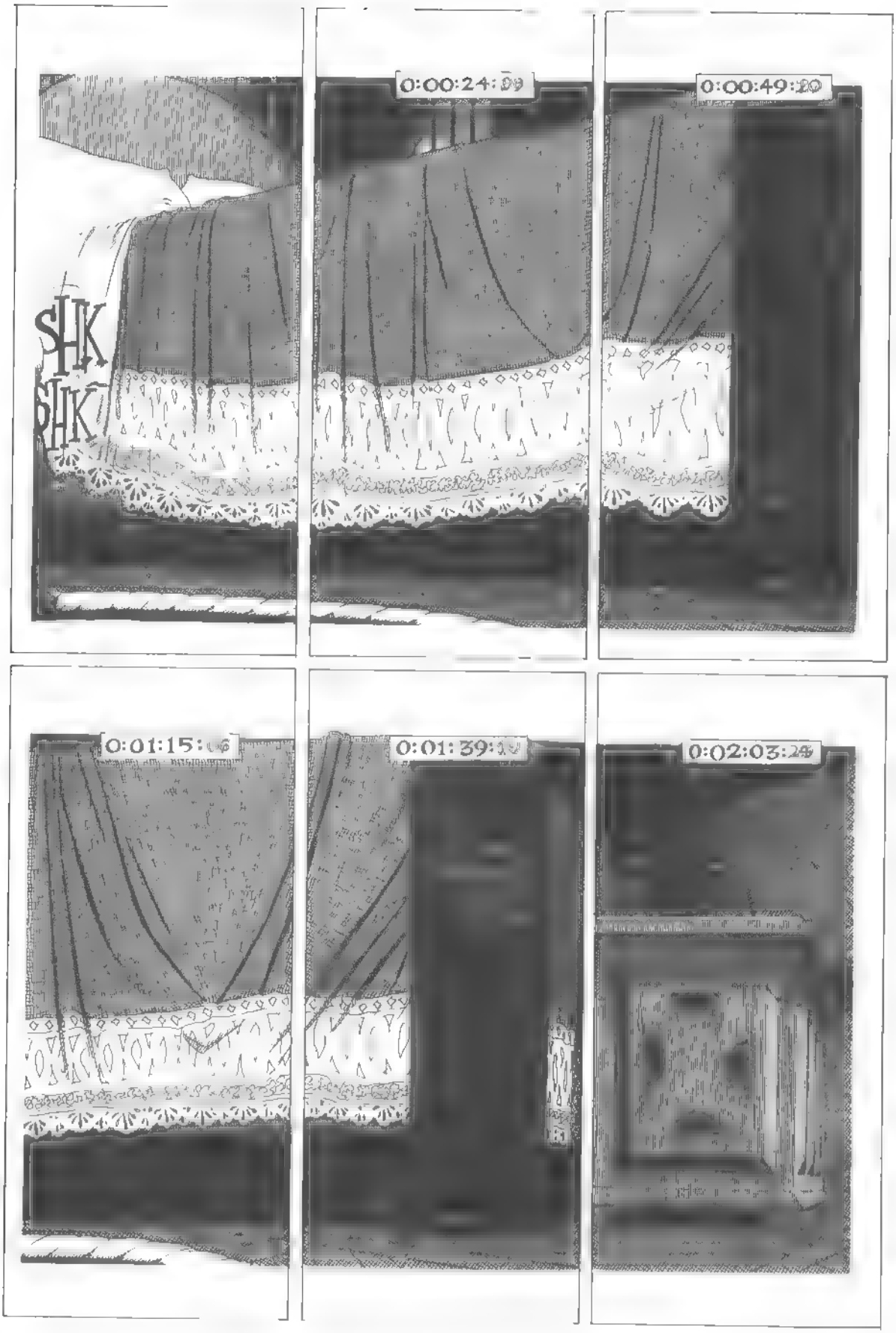
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A HIGH-END RED ALERT LOCKDOWN)

UNLOCK THE DOOR FOR CEREBUS

UNLOCK THE DOOR

HOUSE

DOUBLE CROP


SHK
SHK
0:00:24:09
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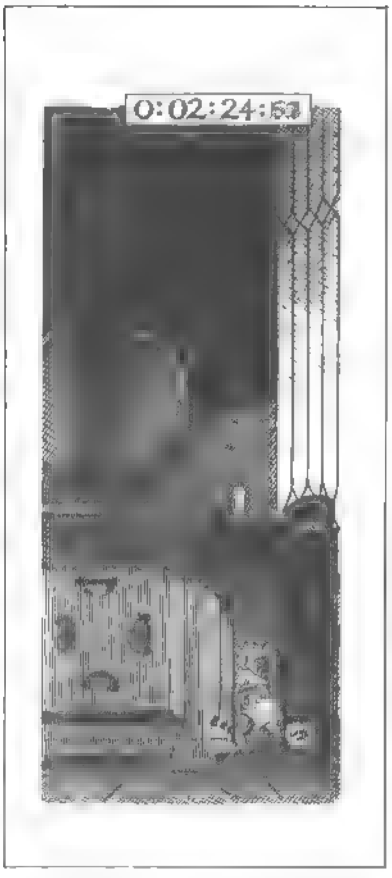
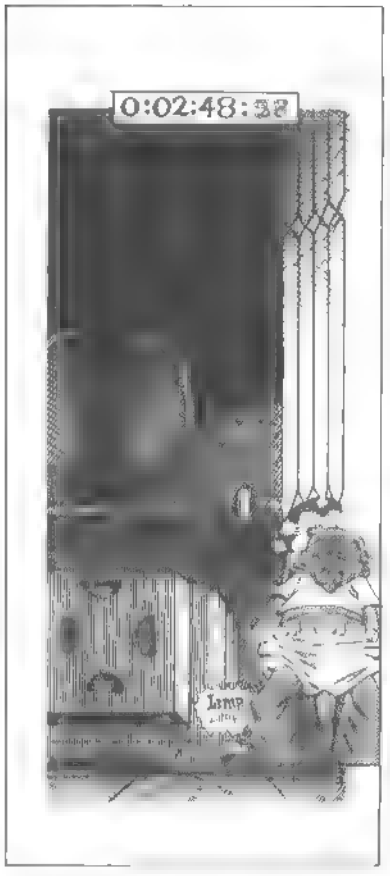
0:02:03:24

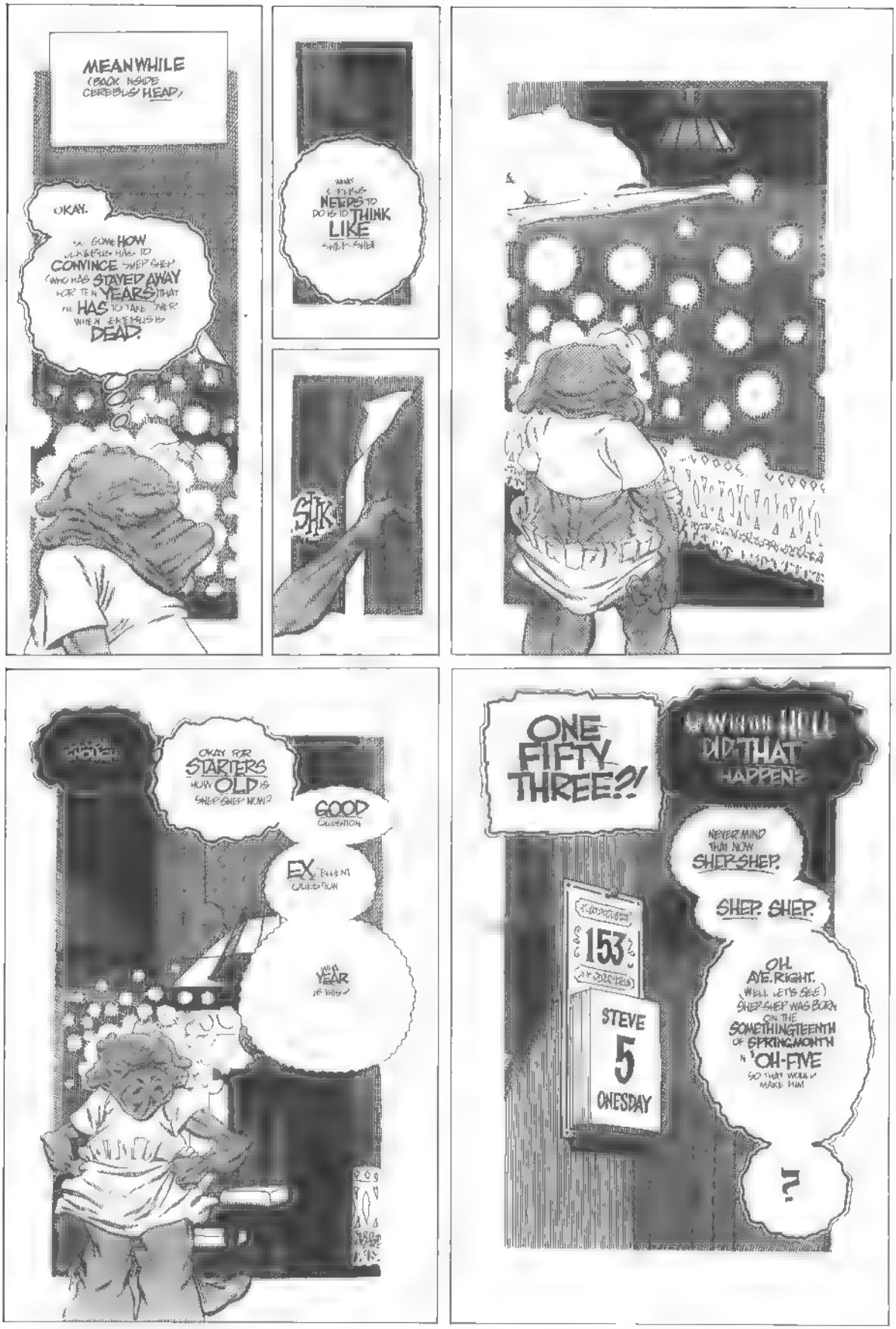


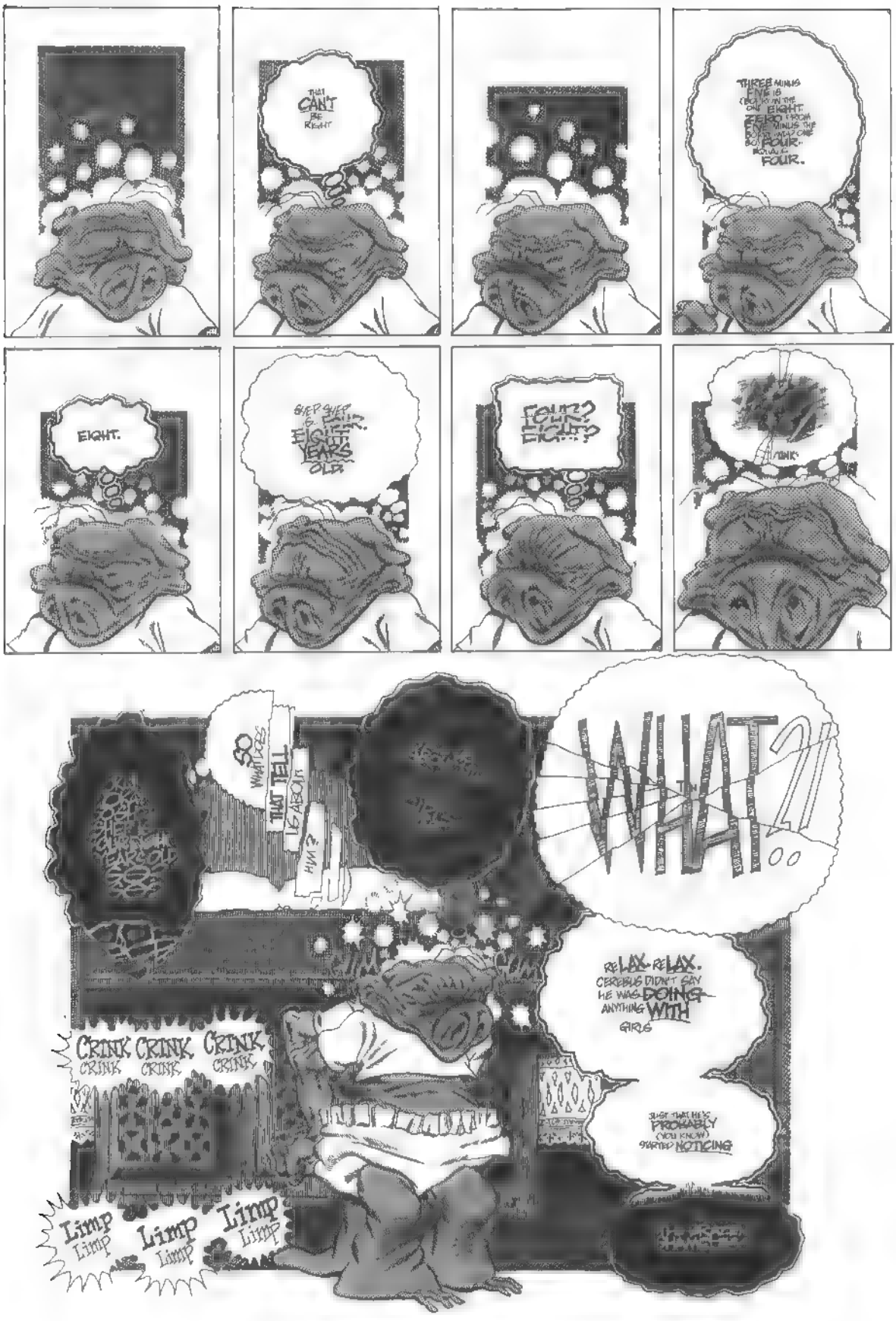


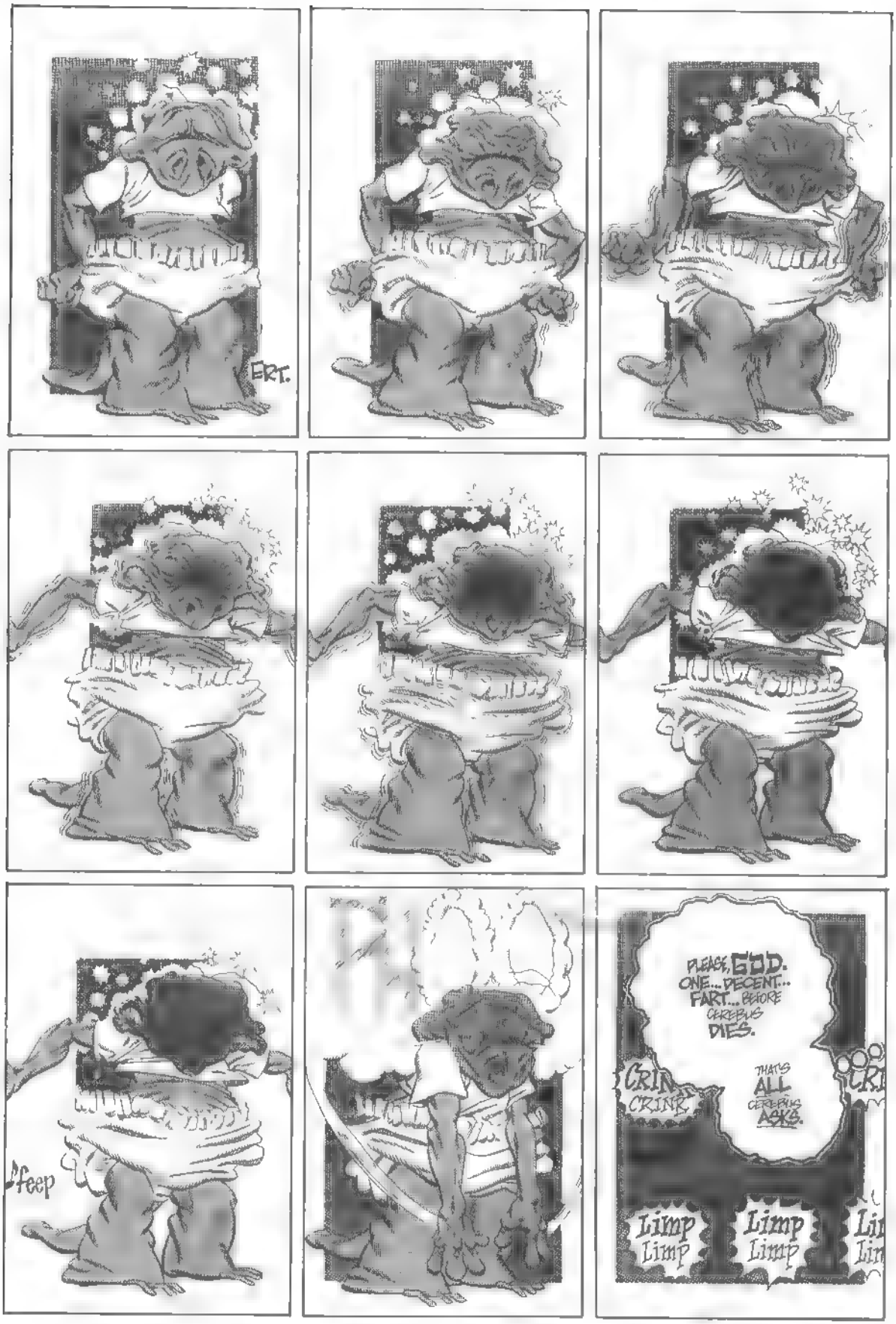
12-METER INDOOR BEDSIDE-TO-BEDSIDE DASH

0:04:08:12

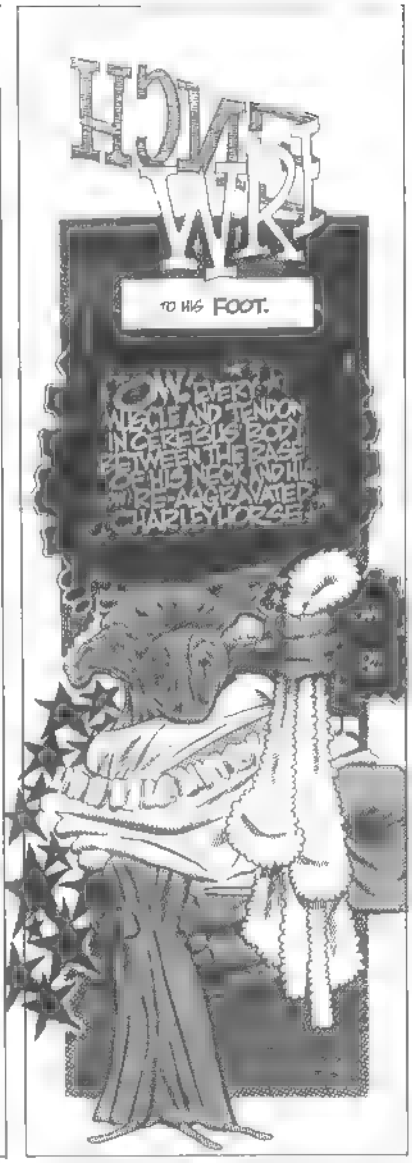
(NEW "PERSONAL BEST!")


MEANWHILE
(BACK INSIDE CERBERUS' HEAD)
OKAY.
SO. SOME HOW CERBERUS HAS TO CONVINCE SHEP SHEP (WHO HAS STAYED AWAY FOR TEN YEARS) THAT HE HAS TO TAKE OVER WHEN EREBUS IS DEAD.
WHAT CERBERUS NEEDS TO DO IS TO THINK LIKE SHEP-SHEP
STK
OKAY FOR STARTERS HOW OLD IS SHEP SHEP NOW?
NOTES
GOOD CELEBRATION
EX-CELLENT CELEBRATION
WHAT YEAR IS THIS?
ONE FIFTY THREE?!
HOW IN THE HELL DID THAT HAPPEN?
NEVER MIND THAT NOW SHEP-SHEP.
SHEP. SHEP.
153
STEVE
5
ONESDAY
OH. AYE. RIGHT. (WELL LETS SEE) SHEP-SHEP WAS BORN ON THE SOMETHINGTEENTH OF SPRINGMONTH IN '0H-FIVE SO THAT WOULD MAKE HIM
?


THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT
THREE MINUS FIVE IS (BOOK) IN THE ONE EIGHT. FROM ONE MINUS THE BOOK ... AND ONE BOOK FOUR. FOUR.
EIGHT.
STEP STEP & FOUR. EIGHT. EIGHT YEARS OLD.
FOUR? EIGHT?
"INK"
SO WHAT DOES THAT TELL US ABOUT HIM?
WHAT?!
RELAX. RELAX. CERCIBUS DIDN'T SAY HE WAS DOING ANYTHING WITH GIRLS
JUST THAT HE'S PROBABLY (YOU KNOW) STARTED NOTICING
CRINK CRINK CRINK CRINK CRINK CRINK
Limp Limp Limp Limp Limp Limp


ERT.
feep
PLEASE, GOD. ONE... DECENT... FART... BEFORE CEREBUS DIES.
CRIK CRIK
THAT'S ALL CEREBUS ASKS.
Limp Limp
Limp Limp

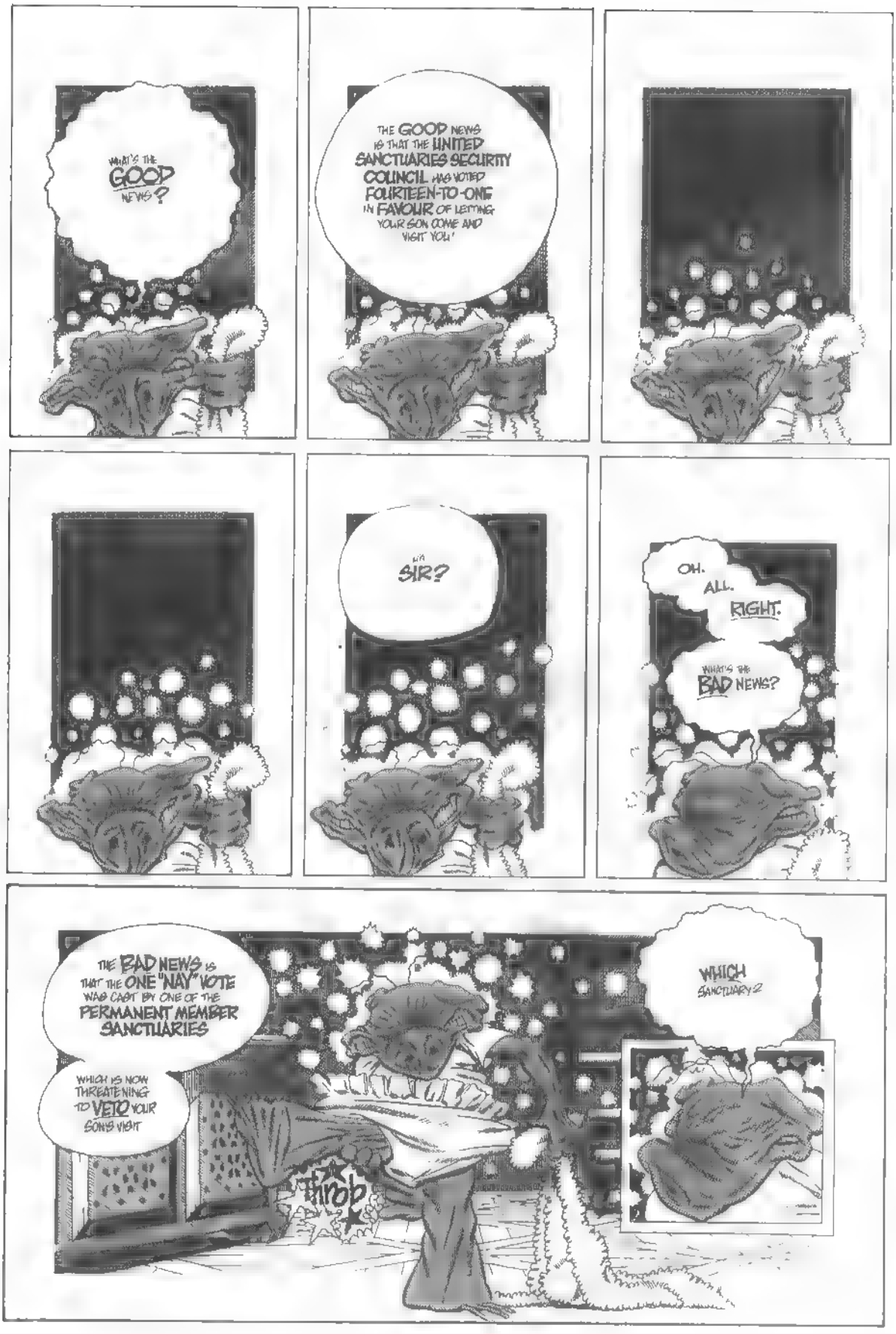
WHAT I MEAN IS BEING UNFAIR.
FAIR HOW?
IF CEREBUS IS GOING TO STUFF HIMSELF WITH CHEESE EVERY DAY --
OW! CEREBUS BACK!
(BEND YOUR KNEES)
OW! CEREBUS KNEE!
-- TO MAKE HIMSELF CONSTERNATED SO THAT CEREBUS DOESN'T HAVE TO CALL FOR "IF-YOU-SO-MUCH-AS-BREATHE-A-WORD-TO-ANYONE-THAT-CEREBUS-HAS-TO-WEAR-ONE-OF-THESE-YOU-ARE-ONE-DEAD" WISE FELLOW--
THEN IT'S HARDLY FAIR TO BLAME
SIR?
O'VERLY?! WITH NEWS OF SHEP-SHEP?!?
CEREBUS LEAPS...


HUMPH!
TO HIS FOOT.
OW! EVERY MUSCLE AND TENDON IN CEREBUS' BODY, BETWEEN THE BASE OF HIS NECK AND HIS TWO RE-AGGRAVATED CHARLEY HORSES!

AYE?

I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS, SIR!

AND DR. L HAVE SOME BAD NEWS


WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?
THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE UNITED SANCTUARIES SECURITY COUNCIL HAS VOTED FOURTEEN-TO-ONE IN FAVOUR OF LETTING YOUR SON COME AND VISIT YOU!
SIR?
OH. ALL. RIGHT.
WHAT'S THE BAD NEWS?
THE BAD NEWS IS THAT THE ONE "NAY" VOTE WAS CAST BY ONE OF THE PERMANENT MEMBER SANCTUARIES
WHICH IS NOW THREATENING TO VETO YOUR SON'S VISIT
Throb
WHICH SANCTUARY?

Le SANCTUAIRE UPPER FELDA des RICKE et JOANNE, LESBIENNES
PLEASE TELL CEREBUS YOU JUST MADE THAT UP
OH, NO SIR!
flip flip.
IN FACT I WAS JUST READING IN THE "ROBBINS' GUIDE TO ESTARCION'S SANCTUARIES..."
flip.
AH!
"Le SANCTUAIRE UPPER FELDA des RICKE et JOANNE, LESBIENNES (founded 132 in the aftermath of The GREAT SCHISM) The adherents of the LESUFReJI--cating, the following, passage from NEW JOANNE'S original interview notes [ref The Sanctuary vs. The Seat of Truth The Book of Cerebus Foundational Dogma NEW JOANNE, Cast Iron Fallopian Tube Press, Parrow, 131 page 287 (originally published in an edited form in Friends of Rookwhoo Tre's Gram Second Issue Summermonth, 104 Cast Iron Fallopian Tube Press)] 'It was just like Girlyboy (Cerebus thought) to keep all the self-contained verses to himself' Pardon? Oh, [laughs] Girlyboy. That was the nickname Cerebus had for Rick back in the original Sanctuary Cerebus never called him that to his face of course'."
--believe that Rick, like Cerebus was a fully developed hermaphrodite and--owing to his greater size and weight--played the 'butch' role to Cerebus 'femme' role in their relationship ('Cerebus never called him that to his face of course') This belief evolved, by 135, into what is known to LESUFReJI believers as the Mystery Doctrine of the Trinity, consisting of The MOTHER, The DAUGHTER and The SCARY TAMPON (also known as the Mystery Doctrine of the THREE WISE VAGINAS) wherein Joanne incarnates as The MOTHER Roxanne as The DAUGHTER and Cerebus as
ALL RIGHT.
ALL RIGHT.
CEREBUS BELIEVES YOU.

OKAY, SO TELL CEREBUS. WHY DO THESE PEOPLE WANT TO VETO SHER-SHEE'S VISIT?
ER. YOU REALLY WANT ME TO TELL YOU, SIR?
OF COURSE! WHATEVER THE REASON IS IT CAN'T BE ANY STUPIDER THAN WHAT YOU JUST READ OUT OF THAT IDIOT BOOK.

THEY'RE AFRAID YOU WANT TO HAVE SEX WITH HIM

THAT LAST COMMENT? WHEN CEREBUS SAID "WHATEVER THE REASON IS, IT CAN'T BE ANY STUPIDER THAN WHAT YOU JUST READ OUT OF THAT IDIOT BOOK"?
YES, SIR?
CEREBUS TAKES THAT BACK

essay

Why Canada Slept

"When they said, Repent, repent.
I don't know what they meant."

Leonard Cohen
"The End"

When, at the conclusion of the previous installment, I alluded to God's hard lesson which I see Canada as beginning to be made to suffer (justifiably—as all of God's hard lessons are irrefutably justifiable) for Canada's overweening self-importance as it continues to shirk its masculine responsibilities in the world, what I had in mind was the recent minor outbreak of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) in the Greater Toronto Area. As a storyteller, I am consistently awed by the measured appropriateness of God's (for want of a better term) "plot devices' There could be no more appropriate punishment for a quasi-nation of Chicken Little "the sky is falling, the sky is falling" hypochondriacs than a new infectious disease.

[Any nation with Marxist national healthcare will, inevitably, become a nation of hypochondriacs. Two examples should suffice. a) the average Ontarian consumes $500 worth of taxpayer-subsidized prescription medicine in a given year and b) an outbreak of tuberculosis in two Toronto homeless shelters in 2001 that saw 15 men develop an active form of the disease and three of them die of related complications—is described by The Tuberculosis Action Group as an "epidemic"].

With the SARS outbreak, God, it seemed to me, was saying quite eloquently, "You don't want to participate with the United States in the war on terrorism? You want to abandon your friends and allies, the U.S., Australia and Britain to take the side of Syria, Russia, France and China? *Okay, here's a little* gift *from your* new *friends, the Chinese. It's called SARS and they got it from wild animals whose flesh they eat in the misbegotten pagan belief that it will make them stronger. If that's the direction you want to go, by all means, here, let Me give you a helping hand." (of course, for those lacking faith in God, events like the SARS outbreak which took place only in Canada of all Western countries—and only in Toronto—of all North American cities, when Vancouver and San Francisco both have much larger Asian populations—are easily dismissed as coincidences however self-evidently astronomical the odds against their occurrence. To the secular-minded the sheer astronomical unlikelihood of only Toronto suffering a SARS outbreak is* refuted *as an astronomical unlikelihood simply because it has occurred. This short circuited, "snake-eating-its-tail" brand of "logic" consistently amazes me.)*

It isn't just that SARS will take a nice, big chunk of change out of the Canadian economy (a billion dollars or more is the current estimate) which economy, by our shirking of our masculine responsibilities since 11 September, has been artificially inflated relative to the U.S. economy—the most shameful brand of wartime profiteering imaginable. "Look how much richer we've become by making you *shoulder* our *military responsibilities" making munitions manufacturers (who are, at least, making a contribution) look absolutely saintly by comparison. Along with God's characteristic measured appropriateness of financial consequence, there was the devastating blow to the self-important MMT (Marxist Metropolitan Toronto) ego which so craves the good opinion of the world upon which it so frequently looks down its parochial, self-important, collectivist nose. Having made no effort, post-11 September, to conceal its soul-deep malignant anti-Americanism with many of the charter members of the Toronto media politburo openly decrying the world's vanguard democracy as warmongers, tyrants and murderers and attempting to persuade others of the validity of that scurrilous viewpoint—turnabout was certainly fair play as Toronto's citizens found themselves, in April and May, being turned away by international cruise lines and tourist destinations, scrutinized for tell-tale SARS symptoms at American airport security (with it's not difficult to imagine—the air of unmistakable distaste one would reserve for examining someone else's used Kleenex). I'm sure that* National Post *columnist Sharon Dunn wasn't alone in self-consciously assuring her hosts on a visit to Alberta that she hadn't been back to Toronto in quite some time (and exaggerating the length of time so as to put her at a greater remove from her city of residence). How many Torontonians, in just so Judas-like a fashion, abandoned their previously beloved city in conversations in foreign lands just as they had abandoned the United States in its time of greatest need? While it would be unlikely that they would have experienced a sense of shame in doing this—shame requires morality, after all, and morality is most unfashionable among the Marxists—they at least would have experienced the inescapable discomfort of the pariah. A "pariahdom" which was entirely unjustified the risk of contracting SARS from a Torontonian was virtually non-existent even at the height of the "crisis" in mid-April—just as their own attempts over the previous year-and-a-half to make the United States into a pariah nation were, likewise, entirely unjustified. There alone the sign of God's immutable—but, again, scrupulously measured—disfavour would be in inescapable evidence. But, as Isaiah says, "for all this, His anger is not turned away but His hand is stretched out still" when it came to which* parts *of the economy would be hardest hit by SARS. First, the hotels and restaurants of Toronto which –as the Canadian dollar was in steep decline in the late '90s—had indulged in (no other term for it, and I speak as a regular patron of Toronto hotels) price-gouging, ensuring that the cost of a Toronto hotel room*

and meal always matched the cost of a New York hotel room and meal, dollar-for-dollar, putting a Toronto hotel stay and restaurant meal arbitrarily out of the price range of virtually all Canadians. Second, our bloated but-still-insatiable Marxist healthcare system which continues to devour tens of billions upon tens of billions of tax dollars with little-to-no accountability even as the quality of healthcare declines. Last but not least, and ancillary to that second point, it meant that the over-paid fellow-travelers of the Marxist Nurses Unions at last and for a brief period earned their keep both in the hazard to their health (the only real threat the SARS "crisis" posed was to hospital patients and health care workers) and in the fact that the members of their inflated ranks had, at last, to do some real work for a change as vast numbers of them were quarantined. The fact that the hospitals continued to function with vast numbers of nurses under quarantine would, in any other venue besides a Marxist state, indicate that there is (to put it as politely as possible) something of an "over-staffing problem" nurse-wise.

[Allow me to indulge in a short digression which somewhat widens the aim of my heavy artillery to include the tendency of ALL of the Western democracies at budget time to cut funding to "everything except Health and Education," the two professions most overwhelmingly dominated by women. The willful blindness to this transparent cash grab by the Marxist-feminists will, I'm sure, be seen as the first of the global village's worldwide con games of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (which, hopefully, will be called the Sim Syndrome after its discoverer, a cartoonist and essayist of the time much maligned by Marxist-feminists as an evil misogynist). (An uncharacteristically lucid observation on the state of Marxist health care in this country came last fall from a former Quebec health minister, Claude Forget, who noted "Canadians need to discard the obsolete concept of comprehensiveness, and focus public spending where it is most appropriate: toward prevention, costly research and development technologies and care for patients with severe illnesses. Regular doctor visits and everyday primary hospital care can be handled more efficiently through affordable private insurance programs." Affordable, that is, for responsible individuals, less affordable for hypochondriacs, which is how it should be.)]

When the provincial government of Premier Ernie Eves offered bonus pay to those nurses who worked at the handful of affected Toronto hospitals, the nurse's unions --in a misguided but characteristic Marxist AND feminist misapprehension of "fairness" -- demanded that ALL *of Ontario's nurses should get an equal amount of bonus pay. Christie Blatchford struck, I think, a telling and resonant note in her column of 7 June—after observing that the public support which had been so much in evidence post-11 September for firemen and policemen had proven conspicuous by its absence when it came to nurses in the SARS "crisis" -- in quoting from a* Globe and Mail *story about the retirement of Kathleen Connors,*

> The fiery retiring president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, who, the story said, has "forged a reputation as one of the most successful labour organizers in Canadian history" and led the way in replacing "the stereotype of the meek handmaiden" with that "of the self-assured militant." Ms. Connors herself has battled cancer, and she sounds like an admirable woman, and I mean her no disrespect. But the victory the paper credits in large measure to her strikes me as rather Pyrrhic. That old handmaiden may have been meek, but by God, she was good, she was kind, and she was loved, if not always respected.

"But for all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still"

But, even as I prepared to document my view on the SARS 'crisis", it became apparent that God was not, by any means, finished dealing with Canada and Ontario quite yet. In the 'bolt from the blue" fashion which is so characteristic of God's justice (the sudden occurrence which, again, is entirely inexplicable but for the fact that it has, self-evidently, occurred), word quite unexpectedly arrived that the Ontario Court of Appeal had not only declared same-sex marriage legal in the province of Ontario, but had instituted the change as a fait accompli, *which would take effect immediately. Following the lead of the unelected judges (two unelected hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husbands and an unelected feminist), the Chrétien government declined to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court, even though the whole issue of separate homosexual rights had been flatly rejected by the politicians who framed the Canadian Charter of Rights back in the 1980s, even though nearly every legislature in the country has voted against recognizing same-sex marriages, even though the federal government itself recently went out of its way to include the notion in law that marriage is a union of a man and a woman "to the exclusion of all others" and even though the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights—having traveled to 12 cities, heard almost 500 witnesses and received 250,000 letters—was in the midst of composing a first draft of its report on the subject, gay marriage pro or con ("It was not a good week for parliamentary participatory democracy," wrote committee co-chair, John McKay in a letter to the* National Post, *14 June, by way of a public apology to those 500 witnesses). Pro it is, and, overnight—by overturning all prior mandates and with no input from the citizenry of our quasi-nation state, quasi-dominion, with no debate in our largely irrelevant House of Commons and no vote by our elected representatives—Canada became only the third country in the world (the other two are Belgium and the Netherlands) to legalize homosexual marriage.*

If you're wondering how this can happen in an ostensibly democratic country, Mark Steyn in his column of 6 August of last year anticipated our present situation of Marxist judicial activism when he wrote,

> The left has an hilarious bumper sticker: "Celebrate Diversity." In the newsrooms of America, they celebrate diversity of race, diversity of gender, diversity of orientation, diversity of everything except the only

diversity that matters diversity of thought. In Canada, the ruthless homogeneity of diversity is even more advanced Someone asked me recently why I hardly ever write about domestic politics these days As James Baker said of the Balkans, I don't have a dog in this fight The " gay marriage" argument sums up Canadian politics very nicely All the action's between the Liberal government and an even more "progressive" court. The court stakes out its turf, the government adopts a position a smidgeonette to the right of the court, and thereby claims to be pragmatic, moderate, a restraining influence on judicial activism. The role of the conservative movement in all this is totally irrelevant, though from time to time some obscure western backbencher will sportingly offer some off-the-cuff soundbite enabling him to be denounced as a homophobic cross-burning Holocaust denier.

If it had not been for 11 September, I would probably never have written anything about the politics of my own country for the reason cited by Mr. Steyn. The Marxist-feminist extremism of Canadian policy-making and its judicial hyper-activism whereby its highest courts enact Marxist-feminist policy—at a great remove from democratic accountability in any sensible definition of the term—has made participation in Canadian democracy meaningless for anyone besides Marxist-feminists. One votes and that is all one can do (in my case, for a candidate representing one of Canada's two conservative parties, in the remote possibility that he might possess vestigial testicles of some sort a remote possibility, indeed, in an environment where inherent squishiness is perceived to be the highest good) and then one takes it as a given that the Supreme Court of Canada will just institute the Marxist-feminist agenda one program at a time between elections Or allow the Ontario Court of Appeal to do so by simply rubber stamping the lower court's government-by-fiat.

*[The historical reason behind our Supreme Court being so peculiarly unaccountable was neatly encapsulated by Jacob Ziegel, professor of law emeritus at the University of Toronto who wrote in "A Supreme democratic deficit" (*National Post *12 August 02): "Canada's Constitution doesn't even mention the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court Act which governs appointments to the Court, was adopted long before Canada became a full sovereign nation and while the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London was still the final tribunal for the resolution of questions of Canadian constitutional and private law Consequently, for many years, appointments to the Supreme Court were treated not very differently from appointments to provincial superior courts and rested ultimately in the discretion of the incumbent prime minister" Our extended national adolescence partly out on our own, partly still living in Mother England's basement—has resulted in a number of atrophied and truncated national traits avoided by the United States in starting from square one with a clean slate. Someone had to provide checks and balances on Supreme Court Justices, ergo "advise and consent' hearings Canada contented itself with the assurance that if our Supreme Court really started getting "off the rails ' the deputy undersecretary to the Chairman of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council would always be there to say, 'Don't be silly Go to your room." And presumably he was right up until the point—the repatriation of our Constitution in 1982 where he suddenly wasn't, so we could no longer say, through diplomatic channels "Daaaad! Beverly's being a Marxist poopy-head" And get the whole thing sorted out "Boy, are* you EVER *going to get it, NOW, Beverly."]*

As the Supreme Court has continued about its unelected, unilateral dismantling of so many institutions which many of us in this country (more the fools, we) thought of as the bedrock foundations of our quasi-nation, quasi-dominion, Beverly McLachlin, the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court—in a speech to the Canadian Club in Toronto characteristic of her "because I said so" feminist style—reiterated her frequently stated view that judges are mere interpreters of the law and not the initiators of it This brand of 'positive reinforcement" is something the Chief Justice is called upon to deliver rather more often than her predecessors had been So far she seems more than happy to do so no matter how at odds with reality her interpretation of events continues to be (although the psychic weight of sustaining Canada's judicial reality on the shaky foundation of "because I said so' has caused her to look progressively more haggard and worn in her news photos)

"This activity of interpretation is more than simply deciding what these and those words mean," she said Rather, it involves assigning meaning where it is unclear, applying straightforward laws to complex situations, harmonizing laws that appear to be in conflict, and determining whether challenged laws are constitutional

this is high level, specialized, intellectual work," she said "Contrary to public myth, judges do not pluck meanings from the air according to their political stripe The judge is more like a gardener, shaping and nurturing the plants so that they grow as intended, occasionally pulling out a weed that offends the plan on which the garden is based."

This is characteristic of Marxist-feminist newspeak inasmuch as it seeks to obfuscate its own self-evident political bias through a simple, blatant, bald-faced denial of the facts The facts, as documented in a National Post *editorial marking the appointment of Quebec's Marie Deschamps to the Court "Until the moment that Justice Deschamps' selection was announced on Thursday, only a select few were even aware that she was under consideration" ('How to pick judges," 10 August 02)· "Whereas the high court overturned just one law in the 20 years preceding the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it has since become one of the country's most potent political forces Since 1982, it has set policy on capital punishment, abortion, minority rights, labour law, and*

countless other issues" As Vic Toews, the Canadian Alliance justice critic pointed out in reaction to the Chief Justice's speech, "Specifically, in respect of the inclusion of sexual orientation under the Charter, during the course of its deliberations on that issue, Parliament voted on a number of occasions not to include the phrase. As a result, it was not included by Parliament in the final text of the Charter. However, this deliberate choice on the part of Parliament was simply ignored by the Supreme Court, which subsequently decided to 'read in' sexual orientation into the charter." If Madame Justice McLachlin is accused of instituting a political agenda in contravention of every current and historical precedent in this country and in open defiance of the democratic will of the people of Canada as expressed through Parliament (as we have seen), Marxist-feminism requires only that she reassure us that that is not the case and we are all expected to be content with that. As she said elsewhere in her speech, "In a pluralistic constitutional democracy, majorities are not permitted to impose their moral values, their conception of the good life, at the expense of those who do not control political life." The Chief Justice even coined a pejorative, "majoritarianism" to deplore what I had previously supposed to be the cornerstone of democracy: that the majority view is supposed to prevail. Silly me. It seems to be the Chief Justice's view that the imposing of moral values must be left to representatives of the Marxist-feminist constituency who—as unelected Supreme Court appointees—do, for the most part, now control all meaningful aspects of political life in this country. As to her decidedly Yoohwhooist, goddess-of-the-national-garden analogy—Peter Sellers Goes to the Supreme Court, *so to speak—it's hard not to be curious as to what the metaphorical weed in the garden of Canadian jurisprudence was that so badly needed pulling in the instituting of same sex marriage, and what was the plan on which the garden is based against which that weed allegedly offended? I suppose it really depends on whose garden you're talking about and whose weed is getting pulled.*

In a comparable fashion, when an Ipsos-Reid poll indicated that judges were rated lower in the public's estimation than were police officers (barely 50% thought they were doing a good job while 48% said they were doing an average or poor job):

> Judge McLachlin said she is not alarmed about the survey's findings because there have also been polls reporting that judges are doing a good job.
>
> 'There was one just a couple of months ago that suggested the Canadian public places enormous confidence in the judiciary and indeed suggested that most Canadians would rather have judges than politicians decide some of the issues," she said.
>
> "Not that I endorse that. I believe the political process has a primary role to play in resolving social issues."

The role of the political process, evidently, being to get out of the way of Chief Justice McLachlin and her colleagues as they institute their feminist agenda. Small wonder that they are so opposed to American-style "vetting" of candidates for the Supreme Court, denouncing the U.S. Senate "advise and consent" confirmation hearings as a "politicization" of the judicial branch of government. I can see her point. Forced to publicly answer questions about one's lunatic fringe opinions is apt to skew the direction of the Court towards the mainstream of Canadian public opinion. And we can't have that. A National Post *reader in a 20 June letter to the editor pointed out that as far as the politicizing of appointments to the Supreme Court go, you can't get much more politicized than the system that we have, where the Justices are chosen by means of "a secretive selection process that takes place within the Liberal party."*

The legalization of gay marriage and the subversion of democracy under which it was achieved was, for me, personally, on so many levels, a gratifying validation of what I had identified two years ago in "Tangent" (Tangent II, to be precise) as the feminist-homosexualist axis and a perfect example of how Marxist-feminist-homosexualists in this country actively undermine democracy in the interests of their own mutual agenda. At another level, I see in this, as well, God's handiwork, which seems more relevant to the present topic of the post-Sept. 11 repercussions which Canadians have brought upon themselves and "Why Canada Slept" with our ongoing, vile and unconscionable choices and actions since then. Only this one, I see as being directed specifically at Canada's men—or, more accurately, Canada's hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husbands. That is, I think God engineered the removal of all meaningful impediments to the legalization of homosexual marriage as a way of saying to Canada's husbands, "Listen, as long as you're as comfortable as you appear to be with shirking your masculine responsibilities, allowing Canada's military to erode to a level of complete irrelevance, sneering at the Real Men of the United States who are taking up the slack and profiteering at their expense, you don't mind if we make it official do you? You don't mind if we pass a law making Canada's husbands officially interchangeable with a bunch of homosexuals?" If there was, on the part of Canada's husbands, any reaction to this in that realm of spirit—in the dark counsels of our sleep, as Norman Mailer once put it—in which all dialogues with God are conducted, I assume that the reaction of Canada's husbands was a certain uneasy shuffling of their spiritual feet, nervous spiritual laughter and uneasy spiritual glances darting in the direction of their wives (long the custodians of what once were, long, long ago their pre-husbandly testicles and, consequently, the court of first and last resort for all husbandly opinions in this country). I don't imagine, however, that apart from these minor bits of "stage business" there was any formal reply—either from the husbands to God or from the wives (to the husbands' pleading looks for matrimonial guidance). Nor do I think God (quite apart from His omniscience) expected one. "That's what I figured. Okay. Now it's official.

Canada's husbands are, by law, interchangeable with a bunch of homosexuals.'

"But for all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

If there was ignorant, gleeful celebration in the Marxist-feminist-homosexualist ranks at this diminishment of Canada's husbands in their own eyes (or whatever parts of their anatomy have not been fully excavated by their wives) and in the eyes of the world—and all Marxist-feminist-homosexualist gleeful celebration will, inevitably, be founded on ignorance—it will, I think, prove to be short-lived. In the Marxist-feminist ranks because the ruling really does serve to pull aside the curtain which has previously concealed the linkage between them—that is, their joint championing of redistribution of wealth in our society based not on merit, not on thrift, not on investment, not on achievement, but purely on the basis of existence. Just as the Marxists believe that simply by virtue of his or her existence, a common labourer has a valid claim on his or her fair and substantial share of the wealth of the industrialist who employs him or her, so too do feminists believe that simply by virtue of existing they are entitled to a fair share of men's possessions: women are entitled to men's jobs, women are entitled to men's positions at universities, women must have equal access (which they don't believe is a reciprocal right for men) to all venues where men gather and women who share domestic accommodations with men (for periods of time which the Marxist-feminist courts are actively whittling down from years to months) are entitled to half of their possessions, half of their accumulated wealth, half of all their future earnings.

The first anecdotal evidence of what happens when you add homosexualists to this unholy Marxist-feminist belief in implicit-entitlement-by-virtue-of-existence, arrives with the morning's newspaper. Two gay men in Toronto who had lived together happily for a number of years are, having obtained a marriage license, now on the verge of breaking up. One wanted a prenuptial agreement saying that if the marriage dissolved neither partner was obliged to support the other financially, while the other (presumably less wealthy partner) rebelled at this. Three guesses as to which one was listed on the marriage license as "bride" (our Marxist-feminist courts, in their unseemly haste, have, evidently, left the Municipal governments of this province with inadequate and culturally insensitive marriage license application forms which demand that one of the partners has to be designated as the bride in a given union. When this appalling breech of political correctness is addressed—hopefully before the Implicit Entitlement Brigade can file a class action lawsuit seeking six-figure redress at taxpayer expense for the grievous and lasting emotional damage that filling out such a form has collectively inflicted upon their eggshell fragile and sensitive selves—it would be interesting to see the look on a young heterosexual fiancée's face as he is forced to check off whether he is Groom 1 or Groom 2. Any feminist absolutist worth her (or her husband's) salt, of course, would maintain that under the inviolate terms of a Woman's Right to Choose, it should be up to the woman to decide whether she wants to be called a bride or a groom. Any feminist absolutist likewise worth her (or her husband's) salt would also maintain that it should be up to the woman as to whether her hubby-to-be will officially enter the legal record as "bride" or "groom". Fortunately, given the complete lack of so much as a mouse's squeak of demurral on the part of Canada's husbands at being made officially interchangeable with a bunch of homosexuals, this should not pose any great difficulty for Madame Bride or Madame Groom. He will be Mr. Bride or Mr. Groom at her discretion and he will learn to like it if he knows what's good for him.

"But for all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

However, even taken as a given (and what evidence do we have to the contrary?) that all of Canada's present *husbands have happily acquiesced to being deemed legally interchangeable with a bunch of homosexuals, that does lead to some larger questions centering on Canada's* potential or future *husbands that will, in my opinion, cause the present feminist glee at Canada's legalization of homosexual marriage to be extremely short-lived, indeed. The first large question is: how many* Men *are there in Canada? Since we are examining this from Madame Bride/Madame Groom's feminist vantage point, let me slightly reframe the question. How many Harrison Fords and Sean Conneries (not the actors themselves, which are unknown private commodities, but their real-world counterparts in the Masculine/Iconic sense) are there in Canada? That is, how many "men's men who are highly desirable to women" exist in the available pool of potential Canadian husbands? I think its safe to assume that after three decades of Marxist-feminist totalitarian indoctrination and brainwashing (a.k.a. the Canadian public school system) and the ubiquity of the feminist-homosexualist axis that, whatever the exact numbers of that population, those numbers are getting smaller and smaller by the day.*

Only women could actively pursue three decades-plus of a "take no prisoners" program of legal, judicial, personal and parental castration and at the end of it plaintively wail, "Where have all the real *men gone?" Very much of a piece with "be careful what you wish for," I think a lot of women now regret, too late, the "power plays" they have insisted on boxing their boyfriends and husbands into. Women win—the issue at hand—and still lose—by having emasculated their partners in their own eyes and in his. I remember my last girlfriend, in the heat of a discussion about feminism's onset in 1970, tossing off the observation, "I don't understand why you let us get away with it." It played a substantial part in our ultimate breakup, being an irresolvable nutcracker of a dilemma. If I let her "get away with" those typical power plays in which all modern women indulge themselves—in the interests of being the strong, independent women that Oprah Winfrey assures them they must be—then I'm a pussy-whipped failure as a man both in her eyes and in my own. If I draw the line in the sand and say, "That's it. No more. I'm an unreasoning and abusive misogynist and my life becomes an on-going nightmare of having to decide where someone else's limitations are to be drawn. I took to telling her that what she needed was a feminist, some nice squishy guy that she could push around. Boy, did* that *get a reaction. But it was true. If you want a strong, masculine boyfriend,*

you better use your woman's right to choose to choose to do as you're told If you want a squish, go find one But don't go around picking fights, testing the boundaries to see what you can and can't "get away with" For me, for any man, the only way out of that box is the door

In that context, the same-sex marriage "victory" for Canadian feminists has to turn to ashes in their mouths In one fell swoop, women have attained the dominant role in every marriage in the country Their viewpoint that we are all one big, squishy interchangeable gender—has prevailed The very idea of a Canadian husband being a "real" man now needs quotation marks around it (what real man would just stand there and take it while he was made interchangeable with homosexuals?) I think it equally safe to assume that the lavender scent of homosexuality having been added to the term "marriage," to the term "husband," to the term "groom,"(especially that last one which suddenly conjures visions of limp-wristed, prancing horse trainers on Victorian estates in Gothic Romance novels) has caused those marital waters—to which the intended Canadian version of "Harrison Ford/Sean Connery as Prey" are being led and from which their Palpitating Feminist Predators most fervently desire that they shall choose to deeply drink—to either recede and vanish like the mirage they have self-evidently now become or to be made so self-evidently poisonous in the eyes of a Harrison Ford or a Sean Connery as to make the avoidance of them a prime masculine directive ("Heer there bee monstors") That is, marriage, which could previously be diminished in the masculine mind as a 'really serious form of dating" at the low end—rather like going out for dinner and a movie only on a permanent basis and at the high end as the most honourable and noble estate to which a gentleman could devote the entirety of his life and heart in a pure conjoining with that counterpart heart—Barry Windsor-Smith's High Romantic "puzzle in a chest' the "heart that might conjure my own" as he put it in "The Beguiling" will now, instead (thanks to the ham-fisted bungling and cow-in-a-china-shop vandalism perpetrated upon the institution of marriage by Canada's masculine Marxist feminists) be evermore cast in the more transparently odious form of, "If you REALLY *loved me you'd GLADLY sign up for ballet class WITH me and HAPPILY wear a leotard and slippers and BE THRILLED to prance and mince around in front of a bunch of strangers" This is worlds apart from "dinner and a movie on a permanent basis" and/or any form of masculine High Romanticism In short, the matrimonial task now before Canada's collectivist Madame Brides/Madame Grooms is to try to entice Harrison Ford or Sean Connery to join them (and their fruity allies) in their court-appointed, brand spanking new Bisexual, Transsexual and Unisexual Husbands Society of Canada The phrase "good fucking luck" leaps to mind Consider the protocols of the already "too-too camp for words" wedding ceremony itself which await When, as a husband, you are invited to the nuptials of your wife's hairdresser, Troy, and his bride/groom-to-be, Lance, what will Miss Manners say is your obligation in the reception line? Will a pair of limp and dewy Troy-and-Lance handshakes suffice to (ahem) discharge your societal obligation or will you be expected to offer your cheek for them to kiss or is your own kiss upon their respective cheeks to be considered* de rigueur, *welcoming them as your fellow grooms to the interchangeably- gendered and hallowed halls of Canadian Husbandness? What if Troy or Lance asks you to slow-dance at the reception? Well, of course you should You aren't a homophobe, are you? How much easier it would have been (it will seem to you, in retrospect), to just have maintained a respectable military budget in this country and to stick by our American allies Or maybe you and Troy and Lance will "hit it off" and the four of you interchangeable bride/grooms can do "that couples thing and vacation at a nude beach somewhere*

"For all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

With the legalization of homosexual marriage drastically diminishing the likelihood of feminists landing themselves a Harrison Ford- or Sean Connery-type and having to restrict themselves, therefore, to candidates drawn from the "feministically-agreeable' but squishy ranks of those males who are "darned proud to be considered interchangeable with homosexuals"

[this jarring self-assessment which will be made sincerely, in the best squishy, liberal tradition of universal acceptance and celebration of everything and everyone, no matter what and no matter who (by the sort of people who see Yasser Arafat as a statesman) far from reassuring the masculine women at which it is directed will instead, I think, exacerbate the entirely justifiable fear already rampant among feminist wives that these all-too-agreeably squishy partners they have been relegated to ensnaring within the marital web are more than "a little light in the loafers" and therefore at risk of "switching teams" somewhere in the course of "happily ever after" from being agreeably squishy with a masculine woman (that is, the apprehensive feminist in question) to being agreeably squishy with a feminine man (that is, the homosexualists they themselves so closely and squishily resemble)]

I think we may have—with the large strategic and large tactical feminist blunder which the legalization of gay marriage so clearly represents—actually turned the corner in Canada and begun the endgame in our protracted game of chess (well, okay, Chinese checkers, maybe) against our feminist antagonists For, even as the Marxist-feminists have, at one go, eliminated the possibility of any kind of marriage taking place between themselves and any male above a 6 on the Masculinity Scale and given that none of them can face being married to anyone below a 4 on that same scale, whatever hard numbers that translates into, statistically, the net effect, I think we are safe in assuming, is a dramatically diminished pool of even vaguely masculine potential husbands

"For all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

Coupled with all recent judicial efforts by our Marxist-feminist courts (having recognized that an infinitely greater peril to their "movement" is posed by the large financial repercussions implicit in loss of access to exponentially larger masculine wealth and exponentially larger masculine earning potential, previously siphoned off in exponentially large amounts through the near-universality of marriage and through the inevitability of draconian

alimony settlements, heretofore the two largest sources of feminist wealth to widen the ensnaring strands of the marital societal web (by unilaterally declaring common law marriage to be legally the same as real marriage

[Although the first attempt to legally make common-law marriage the same as real marriage in this country was rejected by the Supreme Court, I am reasonably certain that the lone dissenting opinion offered by the now-retired Justice Claire L'Heureux Dubé— "To deny them a remedy because their partner chooses to avoid certain consequences creates a situation of exploitation" combining as it does the stripping away of freedom of choice for men and implicitly making women the aggrieved victims in any situation where they don't get exactly what they want is a sure bet for a Marxist-feminist reversal next time out]

by expanding common-law union to legally include affairs where the two participants shared friends in common and spent holidays together, to make a well-heeled boyfriend or lover responsible for child support payments for children not his own at the dissolution of an affair of as little as a few months' duration, and to move in the direction of making divorce the only legal agreement whose result is to be considered non-binding by making it possible for the courts to "revisit" alimony settlements in the event of 'changed circumstances") and given that most of the first generation of feminists have spent what draconian alimony settlements were settled upon them when they were still of a marriageable age and who now face their dotage with whatever tactical largesse the Marxist-feminist courts will be able to scrape together for them under whatever tissue-transparent veil of lies those courts will use to mask what is, as it has always been, misguided, unbecoming, belligerent and ungrateful notions of Implicit Entitlement...

...well, let's just say that it's a very bad time for the exponentially widening population of the now largely unmarriageable feminist ranks to be contemplating a dramatically diminished pool of available husbands Considering the solution that they have chosen is to legally make choosing to be a boyfriend an equally perilous financial choice to choosing to be a husband, to make attendance at a sagging, tired old feminist's Christmas dinner, or anniversary party or the sharing of friends with her legal grounds for getting 'taken to the cleaners" Well let's just say that a Canadian Harrison Ford or a Canadian Sean Connery becomes a pipe dream in that context Even someone as squishy as Pee Wee Herman might well recognize that the only sane course of action is to "toss 'em a quick fuck from time to time," have no friends in common with them and make yourself scarce around any holiday, birthday or anniversary. Hardly the stuff of Cinderella fantasies

And we're just at the beginning of that fundamental erosion in the living standards and the happiness of the philosophical contemporaries, the political daughters and the ideological granddaughters of Betty Friedan .

[as Robert Fulford wrote in "The many breeds of liar' National Post *24 May 03 "Betty Friedan, we now know, re-invented her life in* The Feminine Mystique, *the book that launched contemporary feminism She depicted herself as a naive housewife, imprisoned in the suburbs, who finally rebelled We believed her story, till Daniel Horowitz of Amherst College, a Friedan admirer, discovered that for 15 years before her book appeared she had been writing about social issues for communist and other publications and organizing protests even in the dreaded suburbs. Betty the Innocent Housewife never existed."]*

..Gloria Steinem, Germaine Greer and their ilk. As bad as things are for them now, they are only going to get worse—far, far worse—from here on in Having myself been gleefully- made a pariah by Marxist- feminists for the better part of ten years now, I must heartily concur with that old axiom that revenge is, indeed, a dish best savored cold. Even better, I had to do nothing at all myself in order to bring it about

And with that, I now begin the eighth and final installment of 'Why Canada Slept '

* * * * * * * *

In summing up the various reasons "Why Canada Slept," and why Canada continues to sleep its way through the early part of the Twenty-First Century, in drawing together all those threads which have—in the years since World War II—taken this country from the exalted heights of a first-class nation, with a proud and effective military very much in the vanguard of those who championed freedom and democracy everywhere around the globe, into the degraded cesspool of being one of Marxism's last unhappy outposts among civilized nations, "feminism" seems to neatly encapsulate "where it all went wrong " It is the centerpiece of my thesis that all of the last century's "isms"—feminism, socialism, communism, multiculturalism, bilingualism have as their unifying theme a belief in the mythology of life's inherent unfairness The fetid breeding ground and the most fertile soil in which such belief most surely takes root and brings forth its most prodigious vegetation is in the female of the human species.

When Annika Sorenstam, recently, by invitation, eroded the early stages of the otherwise dignified U S. Open into a media circus it seems to me that it distilled the centrality of the problem (her participation, inescapably, another Act of God—inexplicable as it was in any other way except that it self-evidently happened) Essentially she, the Greatest Woman Golfer in the World was given a "bye" into a Men's Only event that is, she was not required to go through the initial qualifying events. The feminist world literally trembled upon its now permanently wobbly axis at the prospect. Generations of women raised on the implausibility of fairy tales and now sucking balefully at the withered teat of a more exponentially larger implausibility (let us conservatively estimate the greater unlikelihood as being increased by a factor of ten) of the *Charlie's Angels* Syndrome (for want of a better term)—that is, Women Who Kick Serious Butt (You *Go*, Girl) having excited themselves to a near orgasmic level at the prospect of Sorenstam triumphing over a hundred-and-some-odd men in the qualifying round and then whipping all of the

remaining masculine asses over the ensuing weekend to emerge triumphant, Pallas Athena, Diana of the Hunt and all that other Alan Moorian nonsense rolled into one..

I exaggerate? Scarcely so Either about the golfer herself or the Harry Potter happenstance she anticipated When queried, Sorenstam made it clear that she shared whole-heartedly in the feminist mass delusion, claiming (with a straight face) that her goal was total and absolute victory and that such a thing was, indeed, possible, "if all the stars line up correctly."

Well.

There you go

What can one say of a civilization that allows itself to be led to believe for one second that the greatest, most talented and most dedicated men, hard at their chosen profession as Professional Golfers will be scattered like ten pins by a woman "if all the stars line up correctly"? Then there was the female columnist who, on the cusp of this earth-shattering event, ventured the opinion that absolute victory would be a great thing because, "it would give the men something to think about."

Now, the stars have no influence over anything whatever They are pathetic, sagging hydrogen-and-helium chemical experimental attempts to imitate the Big Bang, guttering candle flames (writ however large). Whether they line up or whether they hurtle across space-time and stick each other's heads up their respective stellar bums, they are not going to be able to make a woman win a PGA tournament. Not today, not tomorrow, not fifty years from now

God could make it happen, of course. It would take some doing (mostly making sure that every man in the event, simultaneously, and by a wide margin had the worst professional day of his entire golfing life), but for an omnipotent being it would, I imagine, involve an exertion of Deistic power several orders of magnitude below that which had been required to, let us say, part the Red Sea

But even if He had chosen to do so, even if Sorenstam in a once-in-a-trillion-billion-to-the-power-of-a-quintillion-sextillion chance actually got onto the leader board and stayed there (let's leave aside the exponentially more remote chance that she actually won the whole thing), what, exactly, would it have given the men to think about? There would be a next tournament where (this time, presumably) Sorenstam would be required to jump through all the hoops the PGA had allowed her to bypass the first time What are the odds, do you suppose, that she could make it through even the *first* hoop? Well, looking at how she ultimately did when she was given a "bye" she finished 97th out of 109 contenders the odds are that that would have been the last we would've heard from her. Except in feminist circles, where they would still be doing victory laps fifty years from now and trumpeting the Greatest Achievement of All Time in Professional Golf on the basis of that one, fluke leader board appearance—even when Annika Sorenstam lay withered and gasping upon her deathbed

Quite the contrary to what the feminist columnist intended, far from the results of this once-in-a-lifetime (please, God) experiment giving *men* something to think about those men of the PGA foolish enough to offer an opinion to the feminist barracudas of the international media, that Sorenstam was, self-evidently, toast even before she stepped up to the first tee were, to a man, proven right as events unfolded it should have, *but as usual didn't* give *feminists* something to think about To feminists, the reason that Sorenstam didn't win the PGA event walking away is that the "stars didn't line up correctly" Although they didn't say it, most of them probably suspected a masculine conspiracy, someone spiked Sorenstam's orange juice or hid tiny radio transmitters in her golf shoes because they just couldn't bear the thought of all of them getting their asses kicked by a woman As usual, the men were diplomatic at the completely irrefutable humiliation that Annika Sorenstam underwent on behalf of feminists everywhere No one likes the idea of being humiliated and professional sports figures know that better than anyone One week you're atop the leader board and the next week you fail to make the cut It happens. When it comes to gloating, there is no purer example of "whatever goes around comes around" than professional sports, so in professional sports the vague non-answer has always and will always be the order of the day Tiger Woods ventured the opinion that she should be allowed to try to qualify for more tournaments to give a more accurate idea of whether she can make the grade, rather than this "one chance to make-or-break" I'm pretty sure that he knew that what he was, in essence, proposing was that she should be allowed to humiliate herself as many times as she wanted, but in his high profile position, it sounded less cruel than what it would ultimately have proven to be if anyone had been foolish enough to institute it.

As with all of this feminist Alice Kicks Ass in Wonderland stuff, they also refuse, in the squalid depths of their three-decade-plus mass delusion to recognize an even more central and self-evident truth about the inherent foolishness of feminism That is, what would prevent any one of the golfers in whose company Sorenstam found herself, at the bottom of everyone's scorecard—from saying, "Say, what's the big pot at the Ladies' PGA event worth these days? Seriously? That much? Hmm I got three kids that are going to be going to college in the next few years I guess I might take some time off the PGA circuit and see how I do on the LPGA circuit" Offhand, just from that one PGA event, there are at least fifty, perhaps as many as seventy-five professional golfers who are men who could smoke every feminist ass on the LPGA circuit, without breaking a sweat. And make some good bucks (bucks is bucks) into the bargain But they wouldn't. And the masculine reason *why* they wouldn't is why there's a lesson in the Sorenstam Fiasco for feminists that they just won't face:

For a man to *win* an LPGA tournament would be *humiliating* for the man It would be like entering a children's T ball tournament and really tearing up the base-paths and smacking some major home runs There isn't enough

money in the world to overcome the resulting humiliation of knowingly competing against (pay attention, "ladies")..

inherently, self-evidently, inferior beings.

No, see. You "shut down" again. You're shooting the messenger, Dave Sim the evil misogynist. If we are all equal, or near-equal, then why *wouldn't* a man be allowed to compete in an LPGA event? By your own standards, under the terms of your own delusion, you should welcome Tiger Woods or any other male golfer to compete in the LPGA. What could more accurately convey that having separate events constitutes patriarchal oppression and gender apartheid? Having Tiger Woods or any other male golfer at an LPGA event would spur feminist golfers to dizzying new heights of greatness, wouldn't it? Well, wouldn't it? In contemplating sports figures being spurred to dizzying new heights of greatness by a sudden influx of outside talent, I'm reminded of the words of Leo Durocher (quoted by David Halberstam in *Summer of 49*, his book about the Yankees-Red Sox series of that year) who, in spring training of 1947, headed off an early protest by some of his white players when Jackie Robinson became the first black man admitted into Major League Baseball, "He's just the first. Just the first. They're all going to come, and they're going to be hungry, damned hungry, and if you don't put out, they'll take your jobs." And he was right. He was right in 1947 and he's right today. There are a *lot* of different nationalities in Major League Baseball, a lot of different colours. What's the ratio of white guys to black guys in the Major Leagues today? Who cares? No one would even consider for a moment keeping a statistic like that. (I spoke too soon. In their continuing program of finding racism here, there and everywhere, the Marxist-feminist *Toronto Star* has just made a Marxist-feminist splash with a piece on the Toronto Blue Jays called "The White Jays?" It turns out that, statistically, the Toronto Blue Jays have three fewer ethnic minority players and three more Caucasian players than the Major League Baseball team average. They'll be burning crosses on lawns any minute now.) The case is closed, the point is moot.

The reason that segregation was the inviolate rule before 1947 *was* simple, ugly, unreasoning prejudice, an unfair blockade of black men which was detrimental to baseball itself. Since 1947, with genuine competition across the colour barrier, the caliber of player has improved across the board. Different countries produce better players. A disproportionate number of top-flight major leaguers come from the Dominican Republic. One dinky little island. *Half* of one dinky little island (the other half is Haiti). But no one says, "You can't play big league ball, you're from half-a-dinky-little-island." Hell, no. The scouts look for the best talent and bring them to training camp and a lot of those guys from that half a-dinky-little-island make the cut and, in their rookie years, are clocking in at the top, whatever position they play.

There are, however, no women playing Major League Baseball.

But that isn't because of prejudice, that is because of self-evident common sense. If you brought a woman to training camp with 109 guys, she would clock in around 97 or so. If she was the Best Female Baseball Player in the World. If every player from the Dominican Republic who was given a shot in the major leagues ended up clocking in at #97, you would see a lot fewer scouts flying to the DR. Japan produces some good pitchers. The first few pitchers from Japan weren't so good. They were amazing in Japan and so-so in North America. For a while it looked as if Japanese pitchers were just going to be a fad that came and went. But now there are enough Japanese pitchers who are amazing in Japan and amazing in North America that you will continue to see baseball scouts flying to Japan. But they are only scouting pitchers. Fielding and hitting, the Japanese just aren't in the same league. Is that prejudice? If there is a sudden wave of amazing fielders and hitters from Japan dominating their positions, hell, yes, that will have turned out to be prejudice. But, right now? No. The absolute best pitchers in Japan can compete in North America, they can fill a role. Some of them can only pitch a few innings, some are only starters, some are only closers. But some can pitch nine innings. (Top-notch ball (as, to my regret, Tomo Ohka did last night, pitching for the Montreal Expos against the Blue Jays and [illegible] them 10-2 in a two-hit complete game). But hitters and fielders? No. Not from Japan. At least, not right now.

The affirmative action approach, if it were to be allowed, would be to turn Major League Baseball into a different game by limiting the speed at which you could pitch, imposing limitations on men and skewing female statistics so that men and women could compete in equal numbers in the same game. Whatever the resulting atrocity would be, it would be a game in name only and it would bear only a cursory similarity to Major League Baseball. The masculine way of things is to establish a minimum number of ground rules which apply to everyone and within which everyone is thereby enabled to perform to the highest extent of their own abilities, to achieve their own personal highest form of excellence. The feminist approach would be to establish on Opening Day which team was most deserving of winning the World Series on the basis of its ability to meet exacting quotas of representation and to exhibit good cooperative social skills and to spend the rest of the season monkeying around with everyone's stats until the desired result was achieved.

I maintain that these are across-the-board facts. That the top hundred or two hundred members of any profession or discipline are going to be men. The best woman in any profession or discipline is going to clock in, on a good day, around 97. Feminism can and does skew this reality by all means, fair and foul, judicial and extra-legal (picketing, protest rallies, stacking rules committees, judging panels and personnel – excuse me, human resources – departments with Marxist-feminists). There exists no established criteria that feminism is not willing to subvert, pervert, invert or otherwise monkey with, to no higher purpose than to see a female name in the top 10. Of anything. The purpose of women invading the court systems and using the court systems to pervert the legislative systems and using the school systems to indoctrinate and brainwash children into believing that the genders are inter-

changeable, is to entrench the lie that the only reason women previously clocked in at #97 is that men are jealous of women's inherent superiority and that the top fifty positions, wherever and whenever and in whatever construct they exist must, in the interests of fairness, consist either of twenty-five women and twenty-five men or anywhere up to and including fifty women and no men.

To those still clinging to the fragile hope that feminists are interested in numerical parity only—that is, that feminists do not think the top fifty in any environment should consist half of women as a starting point and that any disproportion favouring women beyond that is all to the good, I cite the words of Quebec's Francine Mathieu-Millaire, vice-president of the province's Federation of Medical Specialists, addressing the disproportionately large number of female students occupying positions in the province's medical courses—74% of the first-year medical class at Sherbrooke, 72% at Montreal and 67% at Laval ("Medical Dean Laments 'The Absence of Men'" *National Post* 8 November 02):

> *"For once, when women establish themselves in a field, instead of analyzing why men are not going any more, we are going to give special treatment to a category of people? I think that would be too bad," she said. When she was a medical student in the early 1970s, she was one of about a dozen women in her class "We never heard anyone complaining, 'It's horrible, it's all men in medicine,'" she said.*

On the contrary, I think that is exactly what we *all* heard, loudly and clearly from 1970 on, "It's horrible, it's all men in (fill in the blank)." And, if I'm not mistaken, all skewing of criteria since then by our institutes of higher brainwashing.. er.. learning, including arbitrary quotas, were undertaken with the assurance that what the perpetrators were interested in was equality (or numerical parity, the feminists do tend to confuse the two) Now that the disproportion skews the other way, we find that men are described as "a category of people" and that the ambition of numerical parity now constitutes "special treatment" for the members of that "category of people" and that it would be "too bad" if that disproportion was addressed.

The problem is endemic As Heather Sokoloff documents in her article "UN's 30% rule on women a 'forgotten target'" (*National Post* 2 February 02) and, in the process, proving more self-revelatory than feminists have tended to be in these areas.

> *A quick count reveals more than 23% of Jean Chretien's 39-member Cabinet are women, a number that exceeds the percentage of women in the House of Commons (20.6%) Even so, the figure falls short of the goal put forward by the United Nations In a report last year titled* Progress of the World's Women, *the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) called for 30% of the world's legislatures to be made up by women.*

To describe this as "undemocratic" is to understate the case dramatically. The purpose of a democracy is to *elect* members to a given country's legislature by the popular will of the people of that country, not to appoint them in numbers approved of by fiat of the world's roving Marxist-feminists Anyway, it turns out that since the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women (what better place for such a conference?) "only eight countries have managed to surpass the 30% mark" But what is truly self-revealing is Miss or Mrs. Sokoloff's next observation:

> *Of the 10 countries where women hold at least a quarter of parliamentary seats, almost all have instituted special measures to get women elected These include setting aside party nominations for women or legislating a minimum percentage of female representation. The New South African constitution, for example , reserves 30% of seats in the national legislature for women. Vietnam, Mozambique and Cuba have similar legislation.*

South Africa, Vietnam, Mozambique and Cuba, those staunch bastions of freedom and democracy for all the world's people. Wait, it gets better;

> *In Germany, where women make up 33 6% of the government, political parties have made public commitments to promoting female politicians Germany's Social Democratic Party requires 33% of its candidates to be women In Canada, women make up under 21% of parliament, in Australia, 22%, the United Kingdom, 18 4%, and the United States, 12 5%. None of these nations has formal quotas in place.*

I find the blithe diffidence with which this is enunciated as if eschewing quotas in a democracy is evidence of something other than a reinforcement of democratic values—to be absolutely breathtaking. Wait, it gets better:

> *"The evidence suggests that, unless countries institute specific measures—and it doesn't have to be quotas, but something—it is hard for women to make progress in parliament," according to Professor Dianne Elson* [wait for it] *Professor of Global Social Change and Human Rights at the University of Essex, England. In the 1993 and 1997 federal elections, Mr Chrétien parachuted some female candidates into ridings, giving them the party nominations despite local riding opposition.*

Critics decried the practice, saying the nominations should be based on merit alone, and it was dropped for the last election. The number of women running in all of Canada's national parties has also fallen off for each election since 1993.

Yet women are surpassing men in other fields without quotas or laws requiring a minimum level of female representation.

In Canada, women make up 48% of the paid labour force, and more than half of newly graduated doctors, lawyers and PhDs.

Why not politics?

Perhaps because in politics you have to, you know, appeal to people? They have to trust you enough to choose you to represent them? That if you play by the rules in a parliamentary democracy you have to contend against actual opponents both in seeking a nomination and in standing for election? That, in a parliamentary democracy, you aren't just foisted upon people? And that people in general don't trust people who have been foisted upon them, as female medical and female legal students are in the Marxist feminist University system? One would suspect Miss or Mrs. Sokoloff of being disingenuous (does she *honestly believe* that there are no gender quotas imposed in this country's medical and legal schools and graduate programs?) but I suspect such is not the case. As much a product of her Marxist-feminist upbringing as any mid-50's Soviet commissar, she is certain that she is discussing her subject in an intelligent fashion even as she scrupulously circumnavigates it. "If the results don't suit the facts then the facts must be mistaken, comrade." "Some" unnamed individuals come to her assistance in endeavouring to alleviate Miss or Mrs. Sokoloff's Marxist-feminist bewilderment:

Some say parliaments in Canada and the United Kingdom are too confrontational. "Some women find that distasteful. They would prefer something more cooperative," Lisa Young, a political science professor at the University of Calgary, said.

Something along the "cooperative" lines which doubtless dictate how many women the political science department at the University of Calgary is required to employ and/or promote within the department at any given time. Cooperative to the point of outright capitulation, in other words:

"It's just a miserable life, particularly in a giant country like Canada. Imagine trying to have a family, particularly young children, and commuting back and forth from Prince George to Ottawa each week. It's craziness."

The Marxist-feminists serve notice that simply being airlifted into a given riding and by-passing the democratic process is inadequate to their purposes. Either the House of Commons must install playground equipment within its chamber or arrange to move every riding in the country to within a twenty-minute drive of downtown Ottawa.

Christy Clark, Deputy Premier of British Columbia, who is charged with recruiting more women to the governing Liberal party, says the dearth of women in government has more to do with their increasing ambivalence towards politics.

'Women are doers, they are task-oriented. They run households, take care of children and have careers. As public skepticism about politics grows, they say, 'Why would I waste my time in politics, you guys never get anything done?'"

M[anuscript] Clark, who is also the Education Minister, says she had to sit down with each potential female candidate and plead with them to run. And that was in an election where Liberal candidates were virtually guaranteed a seat.

Now, call me old-fashioned, but if you are reduced to *pleading* with people to participate in the democratic process, then you are obviously talking to the wrong people. A political candidate has to be more than willing, he has to be determined to win, secure in the conviction that his election will be for the betterment of his *riding*. He may not run a household or take care of children, but perhaps those aren't the two foremost credentials required for participation in good government. Perhaps those who attain a place in our legislatures might find grounding in other disciplines useful. Perhaps finding really nice clothes on sale and knowing all the latest gossip on Ben and JLo might even be (dare I say it) counter-productive to the very highest purposes of good democratic government?

Now what is both interesting and terribly amusing (if you are as resigned as myself to sitting back and enjoying the comedic hi-jinks of High Liberalism in action) is that Sokoloff's article had followed on the heels of a cabinet shuffle in January of last year, a parliamentary tradition at mid-term as various ministers get advanced, moved sideways or shuffled to the backbenches depending on their performance. Well, a number of cabinet ministers had made a proper mess of things and most, if not all of them, were women. Jane Stewart at Human Resources had just sort of misplaced a billion dollars in grants. The money had been paid out, it just wasn't clear to whom and there was no paper trail. Elinor Caplan was, unfortunately, sitting in the Immigration seat when the 11 September music

stopped and found herself quite out of her depth as a knee-jerk Marxist-feminist suddenly under the more watchful eye of the suddenly and understandably rather more unforgiving US Department of Immigration and Naturalization, Anne McLellan, with a voice like a fog-horn, just blew anyone out of the Commons who dared call into question any of her odd decisions at Health and Hedy Fry, our Multiculturalism Minister (yes, yes, we actually have one of those) occupied headlines for several days by claiming in the Commons that "crosses were being burned on lawns in Prince George, even as we speak," which came as a complete surprise to the citizens of Prince George since this was the first they – or anyone else, including the Prince George Police Dept – had heard of it

No, no, no, wait. That isn't the funny part.

The funny part is that the Prime Minister, in shuffling his cabinet, quickly realized that *he couldn't get rid of a single one of them* Why? Because only 23% of his cabinet was composed of women, and if he got rid of all the incompetent women in his cabinet, that would leave him with a smaller percentage – like, say, 0%. So, like everyone at the March Hare's tea party, all the incompetent women just moved over one space, into another portfolio

No, no, no, wait. That isn't the funniest part.

The funniest part, is that having sustained all this damage below the waterline of his political credibility (the thinnest part of his hull to begin with) at the hands of all these Marxist-feminists that he had airlifted into ridings against the democratic will of the riding associations, all these Marxist-feminists who when they were elected, he promoted into cabinet way ahead of most of their more senior male colleagues, thereby sustaining more damage below the waterline of his political credibility – this time within his own party, here, at the first caucus meeting after the shuffle, Dr Carolyn Bennett, Liberal MP for Toronto-St Paul's (she who would soon have her own infamous Marxist-feminist moment-in-the-sun by declaring, "Americans Hate those bastards" as her own singular contribution to the post-11 September state of the Canada-US alliance) Dr Carolyn Bennett stands up at the caucus meeting and wants to know *why the Prime Minister didn't appoint more women to his cabinet instead of just shuffling the ones that he had!*

Well, Aline Chretien's dear hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet Prime Minister of a husband, by all accounts, just lost it Pounding on the table and ranting at the good doctor (doctor of what, I wonder?) about his irrefutable feminist bona fides And even at the time, he must've known that that was a very, very bad idea You can't yell at a Marxist-feminist If you yell at a Marxist-feminist they stop even *pretending* to listen And they win It doesn't matter how wrong they are, as with a wife, if you yell at them, they're right and you're wrong I'm chuckling to myself even as I'm picturing it The Prime Minister hoist to his own Marxist-feminist petard Having turned himself inside out and upside down and literally moved parliamentary heaven and earth to outfit his cabinet with incompetent individuals who would be out of their depth on a high school student council and then realizing that he was forced to retain every one of them (well, actually, Hedy Fry got the boot Even for a Marxist-feminist party, a minister claiming that imaginary crosses were, at that moment, being burned on imaginary lawns on the other side of the country – even when that minister is a female which the prime minister has had to scrape the bottom of the political barrel to find and which he would have to scrape even more deeply to replace—that proved to be beyond the pale of allowable ministerial conduct) now he's being asked, with a straight face, to explain *why we can't have more of them* A frosty reception from his own Madame Bride Madame Groom must've awaited him upon his return to 24 Sussex Drive when word of his tantrum made it, with characteristic swiftness, through the Marxist-feminist grapevine

In the next few days, using the near-absolute dictatorial powers of the PMO, the prime minister, through his designated thug, Marlene Catterall, ensured that Sue Barnes was elected chairthingy of the finance committee (elbowing out of the way both Roy Cullen and Nick Discepola, a senior member of the committee, who was told "we need more women.") and performing the same strong arm ta[illegible] in the foreign affairs committee on behalf of Jean Augustine.

This is, of course, that central Marxist feminist tribal totem, affirmative action, at work That tribal totem which George Jonas ("Racism and sexism? That's an affirmative" *National Post* 25 June 03) effectively distilled when he wrote

> *Affirmative action is discrimination based on sex or race in Canada, mainly on sex, in the US mainly on race The practice is sometimes called reverse discrimination This is inaccurate because the reverse of discrimination is not to discriminate Affirmative action is discrimination, pure and simple—or simple, anyway, for its hardly pure It's discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, sometimes religion—in short, discrimination based on the very factors no one should be discriminated for or against in a liberal society*

Likewise, in an earlier column, recalling the early days of the civil rights movement in the '60s and the early efforts of the feminists in the '70s:

> *In those days the ostensible aim of both movements was to end discrimination and achieve individual equality for all regardless of race or sex The call was for "colour-blind" equality, not for colour- or gender-conscious 'empowerment" I wrote my first article opposing affirmative action 25 years ago, in 1977 I remember the date because the second session of Canada's 30th Parliament passed Bill C-25 on June 2nd*

of that year. It was the first piece of legislation in the country that called for "special programs" designed to eliminate past discrimination by "improving opportunities" for certain groups.

"While it is possible to equalize opportunities for all," I wrote in the Canadian Lawyer, *"it is impossible to increase them for one group without decreasing them for another. This, of course, is as obvious as it is offensive, and it has to be masked by some linguistic device. Hence affirmative action."*

But, returning more specifically to "Why Canada Slept" and to gender-based legislative quotas and the Ottawa Marxist-feminist grapevine, it's worth a side trip to examine one of its biggest grapes (as it were), the Rt. Hon. Sheila Copps, Hamilton East. With the legalization of gay marriage, Liberal MP, Heritage Minister and leadership candidate Sheila Copps is now down to one campaign issue: that two elections from now, the Liberal party should make it mandatory that 50% of the candidates standing for election be women. Joan Bryden, an old classmate of mine, dryly notes in her article "Rock Exits, Copps to Launch Bid" (*National Post*, 15 January), "She does not specify in the speech how she would accomplish that goal." Give Sheila Copps control of the PMO and I guarantee she will do it by whatever undemocratic means are available to her. In *Canada's* PMO? "Let me count the ways." We'll be lucky if its *just* the Liberals who will be forced by law to scrape together 150 warm female feminist bodies to run in half of Canada's parliamentary ridings if Sheila Copps becomes prime minister.

Andrew Coyne, having been given the unenviable task of having to examine Copps' twenty-year-long parliamentary career (as he astutely put it, "Copps has been failing upward her whole career.") concluded with some salient observations which are more than a little universal when documenting Marxist-feminists.

Ah, but you know what all this is, don't you? It's the backlash. Men, male journalists in particular just can't handle a strong woman. From the first she has had to deal with this. Her failed provincial leadership bid, at the age of 29? "I was OK as a token woman, but it all changed when I was seen as a potential threat to the power structure." Her hot-headed antics in Opposition, where she made her name as a member of the Rat Pack? "If she were male," a sympathizer commented at the time, "all this would have been forgiven long ago." Her decision to appear in black leather, astride a motorcycle, on the cover of Saturday Night *magazine? "I don't think it's the kind of question that would have been asked of a man." But, in fact, Copps is where she is today not in spite of being a woman, but because she is a woman. A man who waded about in Hamilton Harbour, dressed in a wetsuit, to "prove" the water was safe, would be dismissed as a showboat. Where are you, Stockwell Day* [former leader of the Canadian Alliance, now its foreign affairs critic, who arrived at his first press conference in a wetsuit, riding a jet-ski. Unlike Copps, he never recovered his credibility with the electorate after his wetsuit-costumed showboating]*? The male MP who suggested to his caucus mates they should fly a hang-glider into the Super Bowl to protest against free trade would be told he needed some rest. And a man who was known for shouting down his opponents, for issuing brusque orders and playing power games—well, there's only one word for that sort of behaviour: macho.*

A June 18 article ("Copps plots for win on second ballot") by Anne Dawson neatly encapsulates the approach that represents the "flip side" of the victimization which is used by Marxist-feminists to extract political leverage: "Ms. Copps has used this campaign to reintroduce herself to Liberals as a person with a positive, appealing outlook who makes 'people feel good about themselves,' and insists that it has worked with Liberals across the board." In a Marxist-feminist world, policies and programs take a back seat to making "people feel good about themselves" as the foremost aptitude in any would-be leader.

But the "just because I'm a woman" victimization gambit is still the court of first resort and reached its nadir with Darlene "Dar" Heatherington, a Lethbridge, Alberta Councilthingy who attempted to run the police departments of Great Falls, Montana and Las Vegas, Nevada around a number of tight delusional little feminist circles insisting that she had been kidnapped, drugged and repeatedly sexually assaulted by a mysterious stranger while on a Municipal field trip to the U.S. She's on her third version of the story at this point (the second one involved running off with a fellow Albertan she met on the road) and has tearfully insisted that the massive media onslaught and inquisition (whose perpetrators just won't seem to take "because I said so" for an answer—unlike her hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husband who has stood resolutely four-square behind each of her three revised versions) wouldn't be happening to her if she were a man. Having returned to her place on city council even as she has been charged with public mischief for sending sexually-explicit threatening letters to herself, she's right about that, but not in the way that she means.

How many of these "internally fermenting grapes" you want to take a look at, folks? I've got a pile of clippings here. How about Colleen Beaumier, Liberal MP for Brampton West-Mississauga, the lone Canadian parliamentarian to accept an invitation to meet with Iraq's leaders as the United States was being tied up in knots at the UN, during a visit organized by Donn Lovette, a long-time Liberal party activist and former vice-president of the (wait for it) United Nations Association of Canada? Here's a few of her direct quotes from Linda Slobodian's "Iraqi ministers 'extremely charming,' Liberal MP says":

(of her one-hour private session with Naji Sabri, Saddam Hussein's Foreign Minister): *"He told me they have been revisiting some of their harsh laws and regulations. He said President Saddam Hussein has spo-*

ken to his ministers and said some of these laws are harsh and they have to be revisited You know. [Mr Sabri] could be a wolf in sheep s clothing, but certainly I got a feeling of sincerity"

"I did not attack the political system here I don t know what's true and what isn't true about Saddam Hussein. Am I enamoured with these people? They are extremely charming"

"First of all, I informed them that I wasn't here officially for the Canadian government I told them I met with the Prime Minister and he had no problem with my position [1] *I did a little bit of PR for our Prime Minister I said he is leading his people he is being a true leader, not trying to manipulate them* [11] *And, you know, part of me really believes that* [111] *I'd like to come back as a pampered princess without a conscience in my next life* [1111]."

(on encouraging Iraq to "open its doors" to the UN Human Rights Commission and to allow it to set up an office in Baghdad) *"He said they have been invited I did a little personal soul-wrenching on myself about the sanctions how I think the United Nations and the entire world has blood on its hands because the sanctions are completely inhumane I've extended a hand on behalf of Canadians who feel the same way about humanity as I do. So I have established some credibility Probably what the Iraqi officials have done for me, more than I have done for them, is they've given me some credibility with Canada"*

"This is an unprovoked war against children If you want the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam Hussein, remove the economic sanctions, give them the ability to gain their own power to make their own decisions."

Don't get me wrong I'm sure Colleen Beaumier is a very nice lady In her publicity photo (which was probably last updated around 1960) she looks like Ann Landers, Lois Lane haircut, tailored suit and all There isn't a single quote up there that I couldn't picture coming out of my mother, my sister, any of my aunts, any of my female cousins, my grandmothers They are and or were, to a woman, not only capable of such moronic pronouncements but, indeed, what collectively passes for "intellect" on their part would, on even cursory examination, prove to be almost exclusively composed of just such blithely fatuous and well-meaning sentiments as are those of Colleen Beaumier ("Oh, no, you see dear, it *couldn't* have been a treasonous act committed against our greatest ally, because, you see, I *meant* well") This is exactly the sort of meaningless cow-in-a-china-shop obfuscation cum aid-and-comfort-to-the-enemy that women envisioned for themselves as they pushed for an expanded political role If they could just get over to some of these countries and sit down and, you know, have a good old heart to-heart with these leaders as they do with the nice neighbour lady down the back, why, they could iron out all these messes in no time Colleen Beaumier is a moron, a well-meaning moron, but a moron for all of that It would be unkind to charge her with treason, it would be unkind to even ask the Prime Minister about his decision to let her travel to Iraq, to meet with Iraq's leadership and to appear on Iraqi TV on their behalf She has the political sophistication of a 10-year-old "Sure, Colleen You go to Baghdad You go straighten them out and tell them what's what" It would take far too much of the Prime Minister's time—or anyone else's to explain why it was a bad idea, why it just wasn't "done" One look at her quotes by anyone at the US State Department, the Canada desk at the US Embassy, 10 Downing Street, Whitehall, Brussels and there is not a single individual who wouldn't instantly recognize the type from long experience with wives and other female relations and dismiss the whole episode out of hand Of course, it is not beyond the realm of imagination that the Prime Minister might even have been allowed back into the bedroom at 24 Sussex when he went home and told Aline that Colleen Beaumier was, unofficially, on her way to Baghdad.

Not that Aline Chretien hasn't got more than sufficient Marxist-feminist "cover" of her own in this country I was particularly struck by a passage in Anne Kingston's "The Power of Aline" (*National Post* 22 August 02) Miss (I'm pretty sure it's Miss—I would be profoundly surprised to find out that it's Mrs they don't make them that squishy) Kingston is a "must read first" in the pages of the *National Post* for me, a completely unreconstructed first-generation-style "women are always right, men are always wrong" feminist I was afraid with the firing of editor-in-chief Ken Whyte that his successor, Matthew Fraser, might not have been let in on the game of the comedic potential inherent in sending over the latest "feminist" story for the Miss Kingston Treatment You want to know how the feminist wing-nuts are going to spin the latest one, you can't go wrong with Kingston. Her first run at the Darlene "Dar" Heatherington story was the greatest gymnastic performance of triple-axle non-sequiturs in living memory Darlene "Dar" makes her next tear-stained appearance before the media July 10 Do try to get ahold of a *Post* the next day. You won't want to miss a minute of the action. I digress

Sub-headed "A Very Political Wife" and "Strong in influence, in the background," it was a Kingston piece, all right The passage that caught my eye was

On a CTV television program in 1997 in one of the rare interviews the Chrétiens conducted as a couple, she expressed frustration with speculation brewing even then that her husband would step down She spoke in the plural, though no one for a second would compare her to Hilary Clinton and her famous "two-for-one" promise "We've just been elected," Aline Chretien said "We still have a job to do When the

time comes, we'll think about it."

I mean, "no one for one second would compare her to Hilary Clinton"? Well, excuse me, Manuscript (that is, Ms.) Kingston, but I would. For *more* than one second For *many* seconds. Seconds which have become hours. Hours which have become weeks, weeks which have become months, months which have become years Since her facelift, she even *looks* like Hilary Clinton, albeit like Hilary Clinton with someone using a motorized winch to pull back her ponytail. Same dull, dead eyes. Same dominatrix eyebrows Just how stupid do you think the *non*-hollowed out men of this country are that you can take the quotes "*We've* just been elected. *We* still have a job to do When the time comes, *we'll* think about it." And just by saying "Doesn't sound like Hilary Clinton a bit," have anyone besides hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husbands go, "That's right. Doesn't sound like Hilary Clinton a bit."

The article went on to assure us that "During the same interview, Chrétien offered that his wife provided constructive criticism—telling him when he was wrong and what, and whom, he should watch out for He also praised her talent for assessing people" Note, not telling him when *she thought* he was wrong. If your Marxist-feminist wife in this country tells you you're wrong, you are wrong, you nutless wonder.

Or take this tidbit from "Chrétien Was Ready to Call Election" by Anne Dawson (30 December 02), regarding the Prime Minister's willingness to call an election if his caucus didn't fall into line and approve the Kyoto Accord protocol, threatening to refuse to sign the nomination papers of those Liberals who were considering voting against the measure:

> *The sources said Mr Chrétien had the complete backing of his wife to play hardball on the nomination papers and that she was more than ready to hit the campaign trail if necessary*

In a country of Marxist-feminists there is nothing wrong with denying a member of your party the democratic right to run for reelection in a riding that they had won in the previous election as long as your wife supports you in doing so.

There is—I can assure my Canadian readers who harbour the faint hope that democracy might make a comeback in this country –no hope in sight. The three candidates for the Liberal leadership are as one in their belief in the efficacy of Marxist-feminist bypassing of the democratic process

> *Ms Copps said she would focus on areas where women are under-represented and promised "full equity" in the powerful Prime Minister's Office*
>
> *Mr Manley said prime ministers should use their powers to nominate more women to key jobs in government agencies.*
>
> *Mr Martin said he would sidestep the party nomination process to name more female candidates in the next election. As leader, he would do this in particular ridings in Quebec that are held by the Bloc Québecois, which some believe the Liberals have an excellent chance of winning.*

Mr. Chrétien's longtime heir apparent, Paul Martin, 99.9% guaranteed to become our next Prime Minister was someone to whom I was willing to give the benefit of the doubt, until the following article which came out around the first anniversary of the 11 September attacks—11 September when he had still been Canada's finance minister and was on his farm when he first got news of the attacks.

> *Mr Martin became emotional when he recalled how he and his wife, Sheila, at one point fought over the farm's telephone on Sept 11. He said he wanted to make a "very important call" when his wife insisted she first call their son in Singapore.*
>
> *He reminded her that it was the middle of the night in southeast Asia and her call would likely wake up their son, Paul, 5,000 kilometres away.*
>
> *"She just looked at me and said, 'you don't understand. This is my son I want to hear from him, I want to touch him, I want to hold him. I want to know he is all right,'" recalled Mr. Martin, his voice cracking. "I have to say, I just handed her the phone."*

Do you understand what I see here? No. Probably not. See, to me, what was required was for the Finance Minister of Canada—with only one phone at his disposal in the middle of what may or may not be a major crisis touching on Canada—was to say, "Listen to me, Sheila. You can't touch your son, right now You can't hold him, right now. He's in Singapore. He is all right The attacks took place in New York, not in Singapore. I am a Minister in Her Majesty's government of Canada and it is my first obligation right now to make several phone calls to find out from the Prime Minister's Office what my next obligations are going to be Your obligation is to go in the other room and compose yourself. I'll be in to see you the minute I find out what it is I am expected to be doing next." Failing that, if he had even said, "I'm not proud of it, but I caved like a house of cards and gave her the phone." But no. He obviously got all choked up at the time—and still, *proudly,* got all choked up a year later, and did so in front of a reporter –as if being emotionally overwhelmed by the sheer nobility involved in caving in to your wife's tears and capitulating completely to her entirely irrational course of action in the middle of an international crisis is some kind of leadership credential Oh, yeah. I'm going to feel a WHOLE lot safer knowing who calls the shots in the

Martin household during a crisis when the Martin household becomes 24 Sussex Drive

But this is all "shooting ducks in a barrel," pointing out the inconsistencies of feminism and the ways in which it has begun to undermine itself. The larger point that I have been attempting to make all along with this is that, if my thesis is correct, that if society is made a level playing field for all concerned, most women are not going to attain to the highest ranks (which I believe is a given), then that means that the largest number of women are at an inherent and irrefutable disadvantage in all other areas of our masculine world. That is, if we accept as an Annika-Sorenstam-based given that the Greatest Women in the World chart very low on the scale established by the Greatest Men in the World, and properly infer from this that the average woman is very low in the pecking order of average men, then it stands to reason that the below average woman is very low in the pecking order of below average men. And the ranks of those who might best be described as "unemployable" – while they will contain a certain number of men—those ranks will be dominated by women. In the same way that it is, I think, safe to say that if the 97th best golfer in the world is a woman and there are 28 million golfers in the world, the bottom 12 million golfers (or so) are likely to be women and that the same model applies to all other professions, disciplines and just-plain jobs. That is, an exponentially large number of women are, by virtue of their gender, completely unsuited to passing their existences in the workaday world, except by staying confined to the drudgery of dead-end, minimum wage jobs because they just aren't suited to the world of employment. I think the evidence supports my thesis, which then makes those women in the upper ranges of the employment picture – the $100,000-a-year-and-up executives with all the perks and the corner offices – something of a bunch of Judas goats for their gender. It is one thing, with the masculine gender, to have the "winners" and the "also rans" when the also-rans, in the majority still have a shot at a living wage, the chance for some advancement and the assurance that vast numbers of them, with a certain number of exceptions, are suited to the world of jobs. Not everyone will make the cut, but the vast majority will. It is another thing when you have a gender unsuited to the workaday world in far, far greater numbers, to be relentlessly presenting that gender with the mythology that their chances of success are the same as their male counterparts. If it's a lie it's a singularly cruel lie to perpetrate on a large population of un-suspecting victims. They *want* to have jobs. They *want* to contribute to society and to be competent and admired and to advance and climb the corporate ladder, to fit the image with which they are being bludgeoned day in and day out of a smart, competent career woman, tough as nails, incisive, quick-witted and soaring upward through the glass ceiling. And there are instances of this, unquestionably. *Many* instances (and bravo for those who have made the grade), but proportionate to the *overall* size of the ranks of their gender *in toto* there are far, far, far fewer of them than there are on the masculine side. A vast majority of women – who are completely ill suited to employment, but who are ideally suited to being wives and mothers – have spent three decades being made to feel inferior, to feel stupid and incompetent because they're not good at something that they were never *meant* to be good at and in which (I would venture to say) most of them are disinterested (the underlying reason, I believe, that women need to be pressured into political life against their will just so the Marxist-feminist agenda can fall well short of its numerical targets) and who are being indoctrinated and brainwashed into rejecting and looking down upon the only thing that they *are* good at and which most of them *are* interested in – making a happy marriage and rearing happy offspring. It is a tyranny, in my view, of the masculine minority of women over the feminine majority of women. Feminine women – as anyone who has had even limited experience with them can tell you – are very easy to tyrannize. You can convince them of just about anything because they are trusting and innocent, admirable traits in a wife and a mother but completely unsuitable in a bank teller, as an example ("Oh, okay. Here's $5,000. Just be sure and bring in some proof you have an account here *next time*, 'kay?") And I think they have been "done wrong" by the masculine side of their gender, sold a bill of goods that women have just as much chance of success in the workaday world as any man, that whatever difficulties there might be in bringing about full female employment in good, high-paying jobs can be attributed to patriarchal oppression and that once vast numbers of men can be bypassed or moved to the societal sidelines, the goal of full female employment in good, high-paying jobs is going to be achieved. Persuading feminine women that true happiness lies in becoming masculine women (as successful as that Marxist-feminist program has proven to be and it has proven to be astonishingly successful) makes as much sense as those few Mr. Moms who stay home and mind the children full-time trying to persuade every other husband and father that he *should* do the same and that in a few years' time they *will* be doing the same. There's no reason *he* can't be Mr. Mom if *he* wants to, but it makes no sense to try and treat that lifestyle decision as anything but a marginal exception to who and what men are and to fully accept the fact that it will never be anything else.

It's not for my own benefit that I've been such a vocal opponent of feminism for all these years. Frankly, the present circumstance suits me just fine. Since I think marriage is a completely unhealthy lifestyle choice it's nice to know that women aren't even able to effectively *portray* themselves as potential wives and mothers these days since I'm not, whatever the perception of me might be, made of stone. In a world of feminine women I would be extremely vulnerable to the ensnaring marital web. Since I have not the remotest interest in and am in fact repelled by the very idea of having a competitive-masculine feminine-roommate-adversary-with-breasts-and-a-vagina with whom I am supposed to share all manner of domestic tasks, male and female, being a good husband one minute and a good wife the next it's nice to know that that's the only game in town right now. Temptation level: 0. It is a lunatic way to spend one's life, one minute being in the embrace of a woman who loves me for my strength and masculinity—which she first saw evidenced in her own father when she was a young girl – and the next minute getting into a heated argument with that same woman who now wants to *be* her father and who wants to be loved for her own strength and masculinity. A woman is a largely dissatisfied and, thus, inherently dichotomous being by her very

nature. Feminism, by imposing upon her two opposing perceptions of herself (both of which she identifies with closely and between which she can, therefore, oscillate wildly like the pendulum her natural disposition most closely resembles—one minute wanting to be *with* someone like her father and the next minute wanting to *be* someone like her father) condemns her and anyone who tries to form a permanent attachment to and with her to enter into a borderline (and sometimes not-so-borderline) psychosis. To respond to one of her perceptions of herself is to excite the antagonism of the other perception of herself. To defer to her masculinity one minute is to disappoint her natural desire for a strong mate. To assert one's masculinity in the next minute is to challenge her own macho perception of herself. "You love it," the wickedly malicious feminist side of herself is apt to say as she wreaks havoc with her latest abrupt swing of her internal pendulum. It's an interesting theory (which I believe feminists cooked up between them since they needed some way to explain their lunatic behaviour to themselves and to others), but a wholly inaccurate one. Only a masochist—and a particularly squishy one at that—could tolerate, let alone love, someone who turns on him so thoroughly, so abruptly and so completely without provocation or sense. It isn't "mysterious," it isn't "exciting"—it is insanity in the thoroughly un-charming and clinical sense of the term.

I would imagine that the Mr. Moms are in an analogous situation. For whatever reason—identifying more strongly with their mothers (or, in this day and age, probably with their nannies or their daycare supervisors)—I'm sure that their Martha Stewart-with-a-penis nature housed within them exists in tandem with a polar opposite residual masculinity that leaves them weeping pitifully at some imagined slight ("You don't even care how hard I worked on that dinner!") and then drawing a line in the sand at a sudden and unexpected jolt of testosterone awakening their dormant, primary, natural masculinity. They are probably no day at the beach to live with for that reason, also oscillating wildly and unexpectedly and taking it out on their masculine wives who long for nothing more than a few minutes peace and quiet with a good cigar away from the workaday rat race. But the goal of our society isn't, nor do I think it should be, to try to determine how to make it possible for everyone to live that way and to encourage everyone to believe that it is any way to live. If you want to be two types of people simultaneously and demand the right to switch from one to the other at the drop of a hat without prior warning, you are certainly within your rights to demand that your significant other come fully-equipped to "roll with the punches" wherever and whenever they might occur. But it is, frankly, lunacy to assume that "we had all better get used to it" in the misguided belief that this is the way we are all going to be living in twenty years time. I think I'm safe in saying that the extent to which we are, as a society, mired in that particular quagmire (and I believe we are deeply, deeply mired in that particular quagmire), all we have really accomplished on a social level is to exponentially multiply the population of deeply unhappy bipolar women and the population of deeply unhappy men who have been forced to try to keep up with them and have accomplished precious little beside—apart from exponentially multiplying the number of divorces and exponentially multiplying the members of our population who live alone. The statistic that I read indicated that 8% of the population lived alone in 1940 and that figure has now surpassed 30%. By my nature, I'm far, far happier alone. I miss sex, of course, but not enough to risk venturing into the inner circles of bipolar, feminist hell to get it. I think more and more men, having experienced those inner circles and having realized that there is a LOT of sports on television and XXX pornography by the metric ton as close as their home computer, well, I think they're becoming more and more willing to just call it a loss on the relationship front (Go! Leafs, Go!). And at their greatest level of participation, opt for "hit-and-run" dating. Rebecca Eckler (my favourite *Post* columnist by a very wide margin) wondered recently at "where do you men go?" citing several girlfriends who had found themselves—after a series of three or four "amazing" dates—being in the situation where the guy just dropped off the face of the earth for all intents and purposes. I think this is also the source of the "SGSG" (Straight Guy Seems Gay) who has perplexed the female population with his sudden appearance. I think those men (actual *men*) still willing to meet the unfairer sex halfway are now treating it as an acting job—like putting on your Batman costume to go out and fight crime, but instead of putting on black-and-gray tights, putting on your "panty-remover" costume—striking, expensive, colour-coordinated virtually gay designer clothing to go out and score some pussy before switching back into your sports (Go, Jays, Go) and porno civilian identity at the point in dating where you would otherwise have to start dealing with a wannabe girlfriend turning into her father at the drop of a hat.

But, I don't believe that women are suited to that "double identity" kind of life. They accept being alone if they have to, but for most of them, their desire for love, for marriage and for family far outweighs their interest in a company expense account, a corner office and a 70-hour work week. And to whatever extent that they all (or most of them) go through phases of going out to "score some cock"—that goes away along about the time that they start hitting the snooze button on their biological alarm clocks and ranks very low when compared with their quest for actual "happily ever after" love. And it doesn't matter how many bad relationships or marriages they've been in, they will never give up hope until the day they are laid six feet under—the first time many of them will have been laid in decades—that Prince Charming is just around the next corner. When the population of people living alone has gone from 8% to over 30% that means that a "double identity" lifestyle—to which men are infinitely more suited than women—is becoming *a* societal norm if not *the* societal norm and, I suspect, will overtake the population of those who are married, co-habiting or otherwise living in a "family" context (if it hasn't already—the 60-odd% of the population that *aren't* living alone constitute dramatically less than 60-odd% of our civilization's households—by the very definition of the statistic's context). The more women have locked themselves into a dichotomous, pendulum-based "this morning I'm a woman, this afternoon I'm my father" existence, the more their portrayal of themselves becomes tailored *to each other* instead of to *men*, that is, to perfecting their wife-and-mother personas (which is—*quél surprise!*—the task to which women who eventually *become* wives and mothers devote a disproportionate

amount of their time) in the hopes of snagging their intended prey within their personal marital web. Women tailoring their perception of themselves to each other, act out the "hot thirty-somethings" role that they see on *Sex and the City* (or whatever today's version of Julia Roberts - JLo? - is presenting to them as a role model dating template). But those portrayals mean something very different to men than they do to women. Even as women are admiring each other's abilities to adopt a "*So* Sarah Jessica Parker" persona and exciting admiration in their peers by successfully doing so, the men are doing with the Sarah Jessica Parkers of this world what they have always done with them - banging them and then splitting. A Sarah Jessica Parker, like the Candace Bushnell who created her, is a good lay—very temporarily—but she is not wife material.

[I remember reading Kyle Baker's interview in the *Comics Journal* and having to laugh when they got to his *Why I Hate Saturn* graphic novel and a short discussion of the lead character, one of those bar-hopping, alcoholic Sarah Jessica Parker types. Kyle Baker's genuine confusion - as someone who had pretty clearly experienced a number of those types in real life and was trying to explain what that type of woman actually is - and the imperviousness to this on the part of the interviewer - who clearly thought of the character as a kind of archetypal, strong, independent woman of his fanboy dreams, no matter what Kyle was saying about her - well, it was one of those great moments of inadvertent comedy in the *Comics Journal* that keeps me coming back issue after issue.]

I think fathers have to accept a certain amount of the blame for how their daughters have ended up. I think most fathers secretly hope that if they encourage their daughters to be career-minded feminists that that will somehow steer their "little girls" away from having sex with anyone and thereby reinforce the incestuous (albeit scrupulously platonic) relationship all fathers have with their daughters and which compels fathers to believe that their daughters are virgins or near-virgins (that's so *cuuute*) years and years past the point where that is even a remote possibility. A deception which daughters are at great pains to perpetuate so there exists at least one person on the face of the earth that sees them as the diametric opposite of a slut.

It seems to me that this is perhaps the best place to address my long-delayed observations on Canada's policy of official bilingualism, since it is very much of a piece with the efforts of Marxist-feminists to attempt to manipulate and change the implicit realities of the differences between the two genders, through legislation and through by-passing the democratic process, in this case centering on language rather than gender. Beginning with Pierre Trudeau, who was its instigator, official bilingualism took as its central theme that dissatisfaction and rebellion within Quebec (the FLQ crisis addressed briefly in the previous installment) could be ameliorated and curtailed through a grandiose scheme of appeasement - by making French into Canada's official "other" language and mandating that all government services within our quasi-dominion, quasi-state were to be available to all citizens in every province in both official languages. As Diane Francis wrote in "Bilingualism's sorry legacy" (*National Post* 8 August 02)

> *The facts are that federal bilingualism was agreed to some 30 years ago by Anglophone Canadians only to appease Quebec. And despite billions spent promoting French, it simply has not taken root anywhere except Quebec, New Brunswick and Ottawa. In Quebec its usage has increased only because of that province's draconian language laws that force francophone and immigrant children to attend French language schools and also because of the exodus during the 1970s of 400,000 Anglophones after the discriminatory laws were passed. Today across Canada, more people speak Cantonese, Italian, Hindi, Portugese or Ukrainian than speak French. "bilingualism" wherever practiced has not bilingualized the population but merely translated into an unfair and costly affirmative action program for francophones at the expense of anglophones as well as of efficiencies in government. By earmarking a job as bilingual in the federal system, for instance, francophones are more likely to be hired because a greater proportion of francophones are bilingual than anglophones speak French. That's because they have an incentive to learn English - the language is absolutely necessary in order for them to succeed or to go anywhere in Canada or the United States. Anglophones, on the other hand, don't have to master French in order to succeed anywhere in North America, except in the federal, Quebec or New Brunswick civil services.*
>
> *That's why Ottawa's bilingualism policy has been unfair from the start. There should have been a quota for francophones based on population.*
>
> *In some federal departments in Ottawa at least 75% of the staff are francophones - with the management ranks up to 90%. At most, francophones should account for no more than their proportional share of the population or less than 20%.*

It really takes a Marxist-feminist like Manuscript Francis to so lucidly encapsulate and enunciate the underpinnings of official bilingualism and to then draw the exact wrong conclusion on what should have been done about it. The solution to statism - intervention by government in those areas where government intervention is completely inappropriate—is not to substitute a different form of inappropriate intervention. French, like any other entity in this world, must succeed or fail on its own merits, merits which are, to a degree, established by the efforts of those to whom it is important and to those who champion its perpetuation but to a far greater extent by the shifting time and tides of history which bring new geopolitical features into existence even as they wash other geopolitical features from sight.

[A distinction also must needs be drawn between actual French and the bastardized form of the language spoken in Quebec and New Brunswick. I remember a journalist from Paris coming to visit to do an interview with me

in the course of his world travels. His stop previous to Kitchener had been Montreal. He told me that he had to keep asking his Quebecois friends to speak English. He found their mongrelized form of French virtually unrecognizable and painful to listen to. I was vastly amused by this.]

To arbitrarily decide that francophones should have a representation in Canada's federal bureaucracy and civil service proportional to their numerical representation in the Canadian population at large is to fall into the same trap that we are experiencing in attempting to do the same with women. What if there aren't that many francophones who are interested in participating in the government (unless they have the guaranteed "all access pass" of official bilingualism to guarantee them the choicest positions)? What if, instead of a numerical representation of 20% of Canada's population—only 10% of those so qualified are interested in working in the civil service? This will bring us to the ridiculous point already cited by British Columbia's Liberal party of having to talk francophones or (more likely) *bribe* francophones into taking jobs they aren't interested in simply because we're still 8,000 francophones short of a politically-correct, Marxist-feminist quorum (even as, I'll bet you dollars to donuts, we'd be turning away 8,000 anglophones or Italians or Ukrainians who are clamouring for those same jobs). Conversely, what if, as with the disproportionately large role that Dominican Republicans play in Major League Baseball, we discovered that there is something about government that is just, unquestionably, in the francophone blood and, even with the dismantling of official bilingualism—it turns out that 40% of any given Ministry in Her Majesty's government is going to be run by francophones. We have no idea why, but that's just how it turns out. What do we do? Fire half of the francophones that everyone agrees are doing a great job and dole out their positions to Cantonese-speaking and Hindi-speaking applicants regardless of ability, regardless of merit, regardless even of *interest*? It seems self-evident to me that you don't want to be in the position of *talking* someone or *bribing* someone into taking on a job that someone else is eager, willing and able to fill. That's lunacy. That, however, is Marxist-feminism.

And it is also the avowed policy of the government of my country, whose Liberal government announced a five-year $751-million dollar plan on official bilingualism which promises half of all young Canadians will be bilingual within 10 years, up from the current rate of 24%. The program was announced 13 March of this year and Lucienne Robillard, the President of the Treasury Board (presumably with a straight face) announced at the same time that the government was serious about implementing its previously-announced bilingualism targets, which call for all executives in the federal public service to be bilingual "by the end of the month." In terms of actual numbers (which the government, in dutiful Marxist-feminist fashion, loves to skew with selective demographics: 24% of "young Canadians" being an example, taking it as a given that everyone who is enrolled in a French immersion course in the public schools will end up fluently bilingual—a clear case of counting your verbs before they're conjugated) there are about 2.2 million bilingual Canadians and 127,375 unilingual French-Canadians and 24 million unilingual Canadians in total. I really hate to break this to them, but three quarters of a billion dollars is not going to make a teardrop's bit of difference to the fact that English is useful in today's world and French isn't.

[If French isn't a dead language like Ancient Greek, it is, at least, well on its way to becoming a moribund language, like Latin. Our historically remote ties with France are, I think, best left that-way instead of being reinforced by our participation in la Francophonie, the international organization whose creation in the 1980s was spearheaded by France as a reactionary measure to the spread of English and to combat (it has never been established by what means) the popularity of American films, music and television programs, a nihilistic approach to culture which excites the worst forms of parochial nationalism and xenophobia to no discernible good purpose. As the *National Post* editorialized, "Canada's membership in la Francophonie might be justified if we were using our position to promote democracy among member states, and lecturing them about human rights abuses and the rule of law in the same righteous tones we've employed against the current U.S. administration on such issues as land mines and the International Criminal Court. As it stands, la Francophonie is a disgrace, and we should be ashamed to have any part of it." Instead, we help finance it to the tune of $250 million a year.]

Note that a little over a mere hundred thousand people in the province of Quebec—even with their fascistic Bill 101 language laws which mandate that all signage in the province must be in French (that is, a Jewish delicatessen can't use Hebrew, A falafel joint can't use Arabic, a Chinese restaurant can't use Cantonese) and that all immigrants must go to French schools—out of a population of however many million, *only 127,375 people are able to get by speaking only French*. The totalitarian *imposition* of French upon the citizens of Quebec—French and non-French—is defended by that province's separatist government as a necessity to stem the tidal wave of English influence. This is directly analogous to the Marxist-feminist patriarchy argument—that our society is enslaved by men and that extraordinary measures need to be taken to dismantle that societal domination by injecting women—against our will and, as we have seen, against their own—upon our governmental structures. Both arguments are inherently foolish. The tidal wave of English influence in the cultures of the world's democracies (and most of its dictatorships) is by free will choice and has far more to do with the success of the American experiment than it does with culture which originates in any other of the English-speaking countries. American culture—American popular culture—is called "pop" for a good reason. It is the first choice of most of the world's population. Arguably, the largest motivation behind English becoming the world's lingua franca is the near-universal attraction of being able to "read" *Terminator 3* in the original. Listen, nobody said that the democratic expression of free will was going to be universally pretty. Likewise with the patriarchy argument. More men choose to enter government than do women. More voters—women and men—choose men to lead them. The right to choose, for French separatists and Marxist-feminists is seen as an inviolable inherent human right—until people decide to choose non-separatism and non-Marxist-feminism, at which point government has to be dragooned into over-riding the choice of the people in the

disgusting than the fact that there is that much excess tax money just lying around waiting for the prime minister to decide what to spend it on. Every year we go through the guessing game of "how much the surplus is going to be" without a moment's consideration that the existence of *any* surplus in government general tax revenues is indicative of *over-taxation*. This is not a small problem with a Marxist-feminist government. To cite just one example, gasoline taxes in Canada account for approximately 42% of the price at station pumps. According to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

> *gas taxes increased more than 500% between 1985 and 1995, from 1.5 to 10 cents per litre. A 1.5-cent tax that Ottawa imposed on gasoline prices seven years ago, to help reduce the federal deficit, remains. This, even though the government now operates in the black.*
>
> *Indeed, Ottawa collected $4.8-billion in gasoline taxes last year, money it dumped into its general revenue account. It then spent just $113-million on highway renewal. That is a meager 2.4% payback.*
>
> *Government spending on highways seems even more penurious when compared with the United States, where US $91.4 billion—far more than is actually collected in the form of American gasoline taxes—is poured back into the roads.*

In formally concluding "Why Canada Slept," I would like to quote the words of Stephen Harper, leader of the Canadian Alliance, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, on the occasion of the commencement of the war of liberation in Iraq:

> *This government, in taking the position it is taking, has betrayed Canada's history and its values. It is simply reading polls and engaging in juvenile and insecure anti-Americanism.*
>
> *But it has done even worse. It has left us standing for nothing--no realistic alternative, no position of principle, no vision of the future. And it has left us standing with no one. Our government is not part of the multilateral coalition in support of the action and it has not been part of any coalition opposing it.*
>
> *The Liberals have found themselves alone, playing an irrelevant and contradictory game on both sides of the fence.*
>
> *This is dangerous, because as we find ourselves isolated from our allies, we find ourselves even more dependent on them—economically, culturally, militarily. A country that does not honour its own friends and allies in a dangerous world—but uses them and rejects them at will—such a country will in time endanger its own existence.*
>
> *To have the future of a great country, we must do more than stand with our friends in the United States, we must recover our own values.*
>
> *This country was forged in large part by war—not because it was easy, but because it was right. In the great wars of the last century—against authoritarianism, against fascism, against communism—Canada did not merely stand with the Americans, we more often than not led the way.*
>
> *We did so for freedom, we did so for democracy. We did so for civilization itself—values which today continue to be embodied in our allies and their leaders, and in their polar opposites, personified by Saddam Hussein and the perpetrators of the attacks of September 11, 2001.*
>
> *We will stand, and I believe most Canadians will quietly stand with us, for these higher values which shaped our past and which we will need in an uncertain future.*

ENDINGS

It was odd having someone here in the studio, odder still to be talking out loud about my thoughts on various matters. The visitor was a journalist for Canada's oldest periodical, *Saturday Night* magazine—Christopher Shulgan. Oddly enough, the same Christopher Shulgan who wrote "The Walk That Changed the World"—about Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Canada in 1983—which I excerpted pretty extensively at the conclusion of part six of this series of essays and who (as it turns out) is something of a *Cerebus* fan. Originally, I had intended just to type out my standard series of conversational answers to a limited number of faxed questions. *Cerebus* fans who are journalists (understandably) tend to use the leverage of free publicity to try and finagle several hours of in-depth discussions of topics which haven't a snowball's chance in hell of making it into a newspaper or magazine article. As I told him over the phone, "I'm not Tom Cruise. At most I'll get a half page or a page. You just tell me what angle you're taking and I'll try to come up with a quote to fit the little space they're giving you." He assured me that he had been promised 4,500 words and tried to convince me to let him actually come and visit. I'll believe a magazine devoting 4,500 words to *Cerebus* when I see it (one of the senior editors is a woman), but the fact that he had written "The Walk…." made me curious to see what he would eventually write and what they would eventually use of it. He asked a lot of questions which I answered more thoughtfully than I have in a long time. As I told him at the end of our second session, what he's looking for is the *Cerebus* equivalent of the Gorbachev-visit-to-a-Niagara-peninsula-supermarket which had formed the centerpiece of his earlier article. He thinks he's found it. That remains to be seen, as well.

Anyway, one of the questions that he asked was about my motivation in choosing to do 300 issues of *Cerebus*. It was the first time I ever described how—when I was in my teens and early twenties—I had envisioned the year

2000, the dawning of The New Millennium. I had pictured the 1990's as a rapidly accelerating decade with all of these large projects suddenly coming out of the woodwork, large projects that I always mentally pictured as dwarfing my own (my own *and Ger's* - Mr. Shulgan's awareness of Gerhard's significance in the project as a co-equal put him head-and-shoulders above most journalists who think of Gerhard as a kind of sidekick). It was one of the reasons that I planned the conclusion of the book for 2004 instead of January 2000—which was where I pictured most of the titanic works of art and literature landing with society-wide explosive force. I wasn't going to risk two decades-plus of blood, sweat and tears (well, blood and sweat, anyway) getting blown out of the water at what I pictured as the millennial, cultural Ground Zero.

You can imagine my surprise when we got there and the big turnover of the clock was marked by everyone hiding under their beds so the Y2K computer bug didn't bite them.

As to cultural upheavals, do you remember any movie or book or creative work that was the defining moment of the year 2000? Anything out of the ordinary? Anything of any length or depth? Let's call a spade a spade, anything that didn't basically suck as badly as most things do?

My overwhelming thought, in the aftermath, was if I just hadn't intimidated myself with the monumental works I thought everyone *else* was doing who was, in my imagination, like me "hiding in plain sight", works that I thought were going to make *Cerebus* look like a short story, I could have been *done* by now.

As the saying goes, "fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me." I had the same sort of reaction to the events of 11 September 2001, thinking to myself, "This is it." This is the transformational event which will shape this generation and this century and, perhaps, centuries to come. This is our equivalent of the Lisbon Earthquake which had devastated Christendom, in the Middle Ages, calling all previous assumptions into question, dashing to pottery shivers vast and accepted realms of human philosophy and hurling new manners of thought and conjecture into sudden prominence. The universality of mute—*mute!* (except for a Susan Sontag or two) horror which went on for days, weeks. Our extended post-World War II holiday was over and now we were in the crucible of history. What we chose to do, each of us, as individuals would mark us for life. Who you were in the twenty-first century, how you would be viewed by your successors in this century, would depend on what you did in the days, weeks, months and years after 11 September. This was my motivation in setting to work on "Islam, My Islam" and "Why Canada Slept". In the context, I wasn't sure it was the right thing to do. It seemed more sensible to abandon *Cerebus* completely and start on something that measured up to the new significance that seemed to be everywhere. I could *do Cerebus*. It was (and, I hope, is) an ambitious and thoughtful piece of work (and there was 289-290 up ahead, I knew I *had* to do that part of the story). It wasn't like David Letterman where he, obviously, just couldn't *couldn't* do his job for days after 11 September. To even call what Letterman did "a job" seemed to make a mockery of the new awareness everyone was experiencing. I'm sure he knew that, even if his audience didn't.

So, anyway, I set to work, sure in my knowledge that what was required, what would be required of everyone and definitely of every writer was an exhaustive thoroughness. I thought tripe like *People* magazine was done for, by way of example. Everyone would be re-examining everything from the top down and from the inside out and the outside in, in a burst of creative and philosophical introspection that would mirror the massive reorganization of virtually every department of the United States government.

Well, I wasn't very far into "Islam, My Islam" before I became aware that, inescapably, that was not going to be the case. Fearful as I had been at the outset that my two serialized essays were going to seem cosmetic (as I say, I thought exhaustive thoroughness was going to be what separated the post-11 September wheat from the chaff), it soon became apparent that even the almost inconceivably gargantuan events of that date would prove no match for the soporific effects of constant exposure to television and the profound inertia that medium engenders. Suddenly, I looked (even to myself) more thoroughly out-of-step with the world than usual. I had the sense that my long-suffering readers were embarrassed on my behalf, that I hadn't "moved on". And I hadn't. I haven't to this day "moved on" from 11 September. Not having television or electronics in my life (I had gotten rid of them a little over a month before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon) it was only in the writings about those electronic entities - in the Arts & Life section of the *National Post*—that I became aware of just how little time it takes for the Arts & Life people to "move on" from an event, even one on the inconceivable scale represented by 11 September. And I was left wondering, Would I have been like that? If I still had my television so that - on those nights when I woke up, paralyzed with new awareness, paralyzed with the certainty that everything - *everything*—had changed - it had been an option to get up and channel-surf or to watch some brainless episode of the *Beverly Hillbillies* or *Three's Company*, to put on the headphones and listen to the happy-time musical doggerel of the Beatles or the fatuous pseudo-decadence of the Rolling Stones—narcotizing my brain cells against the world's now infinitely harder, infinitely sharper reality - would I have "moved on" from 11 September by now or (the more awful thought) by Christmas, 2001?

I'll never know. I don't have a control group for that experiment.

And here I am, coming to the end of "Why Canada Slept," not even two years after the events which set in motion its—and "Islam, My Islam"s—composition. Given that my readership is largely embarrassed on my behalf, that it has probably done irreparable harm to what was left of my reputation and career. Was it worth it?

Was it?

Whenever I consider that question—usually in the context of the twenty-five-plus years that I've devoted to writing and drawing a 6,000-page comic-book story - I always try to remind myself that Norman Mailer - when he

was writing *Advertisements for Myself*, the various essays which make up *The Presidential Papers*, *Of A Fire On The Moon*, *The Armies of the Night* and all of his other literary and journalistic works—had no idea that I was reading his stuff. And when I was reading his stuff, even I hadn't the remotest idea that I would ever write anything longer than smartass retorts to fan letters on the *Cerebus* letters page. I had no idea that I would stop reading Mailer's work abruptly (I'm still not really sure why) and not give him or his work a passing thought for several years until I needed to pull out Peter Manso's *Mailer: His Life and Times* for a Jules Feiffer quote that I needed for the notorious issue 186. A book I proceeded to flip through, and then read large extracts from and then sit down and re-devour in one long sitting—and then re-devour virtually every word of Mailer's work over the ensuing weeks (as a firestorm of controversy, of the sort which used to follow Mailer around as a matter of course, descended upon me) and I sat there reading my long-forgotten mentor and thinking, How could I have forgotten this? How could I have forgotten him? How could I have forgotten how important this was and is to me?

The answer—or part of the answer, anyway—is that it is very convenient to do so. It is a lot easier to live a very conventional life—taking everything at face value, enjoying what you can for what it is and not really expecting too much out of anyone or anything—if you don't allow yourself to see anyone or anything through a Norman Mailer...filter? Once you do, once you translate everyone and everything—the nuances that surround them and the ambience they create—into lucid, compound (however verbose) sentences, it soon becomes impossible to take *anything* at face value, to enjoy *anything* just for what it...purportedly...is. Suddenly you have much higher expectations of everyone and everything that you see. And, suddenly, the highest expectations you have are of yourself and for yourself.

It is no small point that I have ended up at the opposite end of the political spectrum from Mailer, who described himself as a left conservative. The profound influence he had on my thinking did not lead me to his same conclusions in most areas. So, if Mailer's purpose in writing was to create a generation of Mailer clones who would go forth and conquer the world in the name of his left conservative philosophies, my own case would prove a disappointment to him. But I'm sure that was not his purpose. The ultimate purpose of good and lucid writing is clarity and the highest form of clarity is unmistakable excellence. The brand of excellence that I see in Mailer's work, where, even when I don't agree with him, as I so frequently do not agree with him, I am moved to aspire to a more lucid, more excellent brand of thinking on my own. To attempt to "measure up" by not taking the "easy out" intellectually. To know that it is insufficient to simply say, "I don't agree with that. I don't know *why* I don't agree with that, but I don't agree with that." To fall back on just such a failure of intellect is to waste both Norman Mailer's time and my own, in my opinion. To read the opinions, the reasoned arguments of someone whose intellect I admire as much as I do Mailer's and to fail to allow myself to be persuaded when I have no argument against them—well, why would I bother reading him in the first place? Why would I read Mailer, that is, in the way that one listens to the Beatles—as a rather pleasant but unproductive way to pass the time of day. To visit the other side of the equation, why would I waste my time delving for large meaning in "No one I think is in my tree. I mean it must be high or low. But then you can't, you know, tune it but it's all right. That is, I think it's not too bad." Read the words twice and you know that there is nothing there for the intellect even to nibble at, let alone to feast on, nothing there that would tell you much of anything about anything. Am I in John Lennon's tree? Am I the one who is high or low? And which one am I? High or low? Or is it that the tree is high or low?

So that "unknown impact" that a writer can have on his reader is never far from my thoughts. I have no idea who reads *Cerebus*, who re-reads *Cerebus*, how many people just read the comic-book part and how many people read—and re-read—these essays. I don't know how many people's opinions I've changed or how many people's thoughts I have influenced (opposite, complementary or identical reactions depending on the individual). Most especially I have no idea how many *writers* are reading these words or who *will* read these words ten years from now, whether they will have any conscious recollection of them or, as happened in my case with Norman Mailer's writings, they will forget them and then have them forcefully recalled to them years later—or if they will just forget the words, and me, entirely.

But, I have concluded, it *is* worth doing for the sake of those unknown individuals, because to a writer, the course of human civilization is defined in no small part by the thoughts, ideas and philosophies of individuals which are passed on to other individuals in successive generations. As he documents in *The Prisoner of Sex*, no one was more surprised than Mailer himself when he was early selected as Public Enemy Number One by the newly-emergent feminist—or as it was called then, Women's Liberation—movement. As he also wrote, it was too early to tell if it was just another societal fad like folk music or something. He had no way of knowing that his career as one of the most vital and influential voices in Western civilization was, suddenly, at an end. That, far from a fad, feminism would prove to be a societal avalanche, dwarfing the success of its progenitor, Marxism, and thereby leaving Mailer and his work, his fiction and his journalism, isolated, disparaged, marginalized and denigrated. He would no longer be discussed seriously as he had been. He had become a minority of one and—instead of the beacon of insight he had been, to the now proliferating company of hollowed-out-ventriloquist puppet husbands, he would become a guilty pleasure, a strange pornography of the intellect to those who had sold him out for a mess of feminist pottage. Reading and re-reading his work, I had no idea that I was about to accompany him into exile, that I was to become a minority of one in my own chosen field.

As this has been the last occasion when I will have an audience of this size to address on the issue of feminism—I have no idea what God might have in store for me, but I'm reasonably certain that the Marxist-feminists will see to it that, without the shelter of *Cerebus*' 300 issues, I will soon be taking up residence in a state of marginalization

that will make being the creator of *Cerebus* look positively mainstream by comparison—and as my purpose here is, at least partly, to throw one final lifeline to whomever it will be who will have to take up the gauntlet and carry it forward for a decade or two, as the first of the twenty-first century's minorities of one, the lone masculine combatant in the war on Marxist-feminism—in which he himself might prevail, or in which he himself might prove to be only the third in a (century long? centuries long?) chain of successors to the position. And he must be prepared to be completely alone. Since the *Prisoner of Sex*, Mailer has pretty thoroughly capitulated to the other team and is largely indistinguishable from all other hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husband-writers both in the subjects he selects and those he avoids. There, but for the grace of God, (I fervently pray it be not so) go I. I'd like to cite an early episode in the Marxist-feminist fiasco as a cautionary note, the Theatre for Ideas evening which had been Mailer's own idea and which was described by Diana Trilling, a noted author, journalist, editor and soon to be an endangered species—*lady*, in Peter Manso's aforementioned book;

> *The Theater for Ideas was organizing a debate for March 31, 1971, and when they called to ask me if I'd speak, they said that every woman that they'd asked other than Germaine Greer had refused to be on the same panel with Norman. They regarded him as a male chauvinist pig and they wouldn't give him the opportunity to debate with them.* The Prisoner of Sex *had just been published or was about to be published, and I think it was Mailer who himself originally proposed the evening, but Germaine Greer was set. Her book,* The Female Eunuch, *was just coming out too, and I accepted with the one condition that I be the last speaker. I realized that Greer was much more the star of the evening than I was and that therefore she should speak last, but those were my terms, and she pleasantly agreed. I wanted to be last because I hadn't the faintest idea of what might be said and I wanted to be able to change my prepared speech if necessary.*
>
> *But as the evening got closer, I saw a piece in* The Village Voice *by Jill Johnston about Greer having helped some girl prepare for her first sexual intercourse, apparently getting her into proper shape for a sexual entrance, and I went into a panic. I thought, My God, what am I doing in this company? By that time I knew that Jill was going to be one of the panel too. Lionel* [Trilling, her husband] *was wonderful in that situation. He kept saying, "You are what you are, you'll do what you have to do. Stop worrying about what kind of situation you're* [going to] *be in- it won't matter." So tempted though I was to back out, I didn't back out, but I was truly scared. I saw myself as the token straight, the sacrificial lamb of the evening. Maybe Norman had come to see himself that way too, except he was the one who had set the whole thing up.*
>
> *When I got to the Green Room at Town Hall, there was Norman posing with Greer for the photographers. I thought, What's he doing standing there holding Greer's book up to the cameras? Why should he lend himself to that kind of promotion? When he came over and kissed me hello, I thought this wasn't the man I usually kissed hello. I suddenly didn't like him. Greer looked at me malevolently but never said a word. She was wearing a floozy kind of fox fur that trailed over her shoulder to the floor. It was mangy. I expected moths to fly out of it. Wasn't it Orlovsky—or was it Ginsberg?—who said that if he shaved, the moths would fly out of his beard? Then a little girl from the provinces walked into the Green Room carrying a box containing a gardenia for Norman. It was a token of love, she was offering herself to him. Could anything have been more inappropriate at that moment? And between this little girl and Germaine Greer, the situation was plenty inappropriate for me too. I certainly didn't belong there.*
>
> *We went out on the stage but we had to wait forever before the curtain could go up. The audience was very restive but we couldn't start because Jill Johnston had disappeared, and when she finally did come back, carrying a paper cup with some kind of weird liquid in it—she kept offering me a sip, but I refused a sip—she announced that she wanted to speak last. She was wearing dungarees, Jackie Ceballos of NOW, the fourth speaker, was wearing a slacks suit with big gold embroidery on it—the trade unionist of the liberation movement with gold embroidery. What a collection we were! Norman said that it was all settled that I was to be last. There was good reason that Jill had wanted to come at the end, as we later discovered, but Norman prevented that.*
>
> *I was sitting on one side of Norman, Germaine Greer on the other, and you couldn't miss what was going on between them. She was publicly out to get him* [that is, sexually], *and obviously he was aware of it—how could he not be? He was very self-conscious about it.*
>
> *I don't buy that avenging-penis talk of his in* The Prisoner of Sex. *What avenger? A penis can go limp—then it's avenging the avenger. Norman should have taken that into account.*
>
> *Anyway, whatever the embarrassments or complications of his situation with Greer, I didn't feel tender toward him as I ordinarily might because I didn't like the way he was acting to me. We had a much more intimate and trusting relationship than he seemed willing to demonstrate in front of Greer. It was as if he was suddenly casting me in the role of visiting family—something like that—and I didn't like it a bit. I don't like people who treat me differently depending on who's watching.*
>
> *Finally we began. The curtains opened, and as I looked out over the audience I was blinded by the klieg lights. They were making a movie* [a documentary]—*something else I hadn't expected. Still, I could see it was a mob. The jet-setters were downstairs at $25 a ticket, I don't remember whether it was $10 or $15 in the balcony. Jammed. Both Adele and Jeanne Campbell* [two of Mailer's ex-wives], *but I didn't see Beverly*

[Mailer's wife at the time] *I don't know how many seats there are in Town Hall, but all week people had been calling me to ask if I could get them in. God, what an evening. I'd, of course, read Norman's book carefully and written a paper—I never speak in public without writing out my speech. The only ground rule was how much time we each had. It was either fifteen or twenty minutes. I forget which—maybe it was even less.*

Ceballos spoke first, Jill second, Greer was third. Jill allowed Germaine to finish, then she put on her show. Two lesbian friends in dungarees charged up the steps from the audience, and all three of them embraced—three pretty solid women embracing with more ardor than aim. The scene had been prepared, but they lost their balance and fell over on the stage, which I don't think had been prepared at all. So then the three of them just sort of rolled around, off and on each other, hugging and kissing. Norman was furious, and he made the most unbelievable remark I've ever heard. He called to Jill to get up and act like a lady! Could anything have been more perfect? These three lesbians are rolling around on the stage and Norman commands, "Jill, get up and act like a lady!" But actually it was worse than that, because I could sense that he was going to get up and try to pull them apart. I just hissed at him, "Don't touch them!" I don't know if he heard me or not, but he didn't move. If he had laid a hand on one of those women there would've been a riot.

Everybody in the audience had been whooping and cheering all evening, and the yells and shouts had been full of obscenities, most of them directed at Norman. He was on the hot seat, a little rattled, I think, but he managed fairly well. He wasn't boozed. He gave as good as he got, matching obscenity with obscenity—if that's managing well, which I suppose it was. When Jill and her friends were on the stage he said something like "You can get as much prick and cunt as you want around the corner on Forty-second Street for two dollars and fifty cents. We don't need it here"—which was sound enough, but nothing was very effective. Jill and the others, though, finally got tired and walked away. What else was there to do, rip off each other's pants?

Okay, so now it's time for me to talk, and I read a very serious piece. I'm going along, standing at the podium, but as if I have eyes in the back of my head, I'm perfectly aware that Greer is doing a job of upstaging me. I'd read somewhere that she tried to do it to Hildegarde when they appeared together. Hildegarde had supposedly turned to Greer and said, "I've been upstaged by the best of them. You don't get away with it."

I felt Norman was conspiring in it. Afterwards my friends in the audience told me that Greer was passing him notes while I was speaking. Certainly I knew he wasn't paying attention to what I was saying, and I was getting into a rage. Either Norman pays attention to what I say or he's not a friend of mine.

Then the last straw: I wasn't allowed to finish. I thought I was still within my time limit and had about five minutes to go, but Norman said, "Time's up!"—very peremptorily, like that. I frowned and said, "Just a minute." I quickly summarized what I had left to say.

My piece was serious, Greer's was serious too. I guess we were all serious. Norman was as serious as he was in The Prisoner of Sex; *it was on that level. But for me the important fact of the evening was that he had treated me not with disrespect but with lack of respect, and I was conscious at the time of reappraising him, of suddenly seeing him in a new light. I felt I was being somehow misused, or at least mistreated as a friend. I had been discussing his work straightforwardly and with the greatest seriousness, but he wasn't responding that way.*

The next day when he read my speech he called me up. I suppose in a way he apologized for how he had acted the previous evening, but not really. He said he hadn't realized what a serious speech it had been. But doesn't he know me well enough to know that any damn thing I do is done seriously, the best I know how? I didn't press him or tell him I was angry, but I must've said something that implied the question, 'Did you go to bed with her?" because he managed to tell me that he hadn't. He indicated that he was kind of fearful of her—as well he might have been because later on she wrote a piece about the evening saying that she had never thought he would be any good in bed anyway.

But even if he didn't go to bed with her, he was terribly taken with her. But you don't desert a friend, sort of slough a friend off, because you're taken with another woman. Nobody's allowed to do that to me. I've had it done to me two or three times in my life, and I don't readily forgive it. If somebody wants to "make" Mary Jane, okay, let him "make" Mary Jane, but he mustn't misuse me in the process.

Later, when I too wrote about the occasion, I said that though its calendar date was 1971, the sixties had come to a close with that evening. What I was referring to was the fierce improvisation of the evening and its particular kind of sexual license.

Although I'm undoubtedly trying my readers' patience here, my concern is really only with that individual who will become the new minority of one, so I'm afraid I must belabour the point I'm about to make with Jules Feiffer's observations which followed those of Diana Trilling in Manso's book.

I thought the Theater for Ideas events were wonderful. You could watch all of those powerful egos at work, elucidating absolutely nothing, and everybody had his or her own style. Susan Sontag would always rise and ask a question, and I don't think she's ever spoken an unparsed sentence in her life. Lizzie

Hardwick would get up and be the southern girl who wasn't very well educated and didn't know much. She'd present all her lack of credentials, then, pausing for a moment, she'd proceed to give a withering brilliant dissection of everything everybody onstage had to say, proving how weak everyone's argument was but her own, which I think she did that night with Norman and Greer, because I remember giggling to myself.

That evening was show business, just as most of those evenings were. But that doesn't mean they weren't worthwhile. They were great fun and got a lot of attention. It's ego-tripping at a very high level. You're getting a lot of intelligent people saying interesting, amusing, and even sometimes perceptive things, complex people working off each other, playing off each other, even though a lot of what they're saying is pure bullshit based on the moment. Certainly anything that went on between Greer and Norman had an enormous subtext, so the overt stuff was wonderful to watch.

There's no doubt that Diana Trilling was offended, though, and mainly because you can't be with Diana more than thirty seconds before she'll talk about something called "the intelligentsia." She takes a very aristocratic view, as I suppose Lionel did, of a very special group in society, as if this is the rabbinate. I was never a part of that group, so the very people she thought were so highly serious were often hilarious to me. Philip Rahv, for example, when he was having his fights at Partisan Review. *I'd read those letters and think, This is a joke. I was too lazy to do it, but one of my fantasies was to write a satire of the letter pages in* Partisan *or* Commentary, *because you have all these people writing cool, reasoned, scholarly rebuttals to each other which are really filled with such rage and personal venom. It's jockeying for position. "I'm right, you're wrong," "It's my ball," "It's my turf." Underneath the civilized tone are murderous fantasies. They're supposedly arguing about something, but they're really saying, "I disagree with you. Therefore there's only one thing left for me to do and that's kill you!"*

The cautionary note struck here, to me, is this: when—not if—feminism is at last eliminated from our society as the pathological contagion it is, it cannot be accomplished in any "live" setting. In my view, as the sole opponent of women's lib who was willing to publicly defend that position in 1971, Mailer did an enormous disservice to the viewpoint by his choice of venue. A Theatre for Ideas, to me, is a contradiction in terms. Theatre is not about ideas, it is about histrionics, emotional effects and/or pyrotechnics. Tangentially speaking, so is television, the structure of the medium which—adopted for the evening's festivities—by means of severe time constraints, implicitly limits the exposition and enunciation of any viewpoint to a few broad brush strokes of general observation. Under the strictures of theatre and television, any viewpoint can be made to seem of comparable validity to any other. "Making the trains run on time," could occupy an entire segment and leave 1930s Italian fascism looking like just one among many lucid options for the governing of society. Which, given that feminism has no particularly lucid basis for its existence any more complex than "making the trains runs on time" (i.e. "women want to play, too!"), makes theatre and television those media which most distinctly favour the defense of feminism. Arguably, without the "sound bite" approach to current events which television and radio did more to (mistakenly) validate as the only means of "communication," feminism would never have made it to the societal launchpad in the first place. Given, as well, that feminism in its nascent form (which had been with us for centuries in a variety of incarnations) had, by 1971, twisted, distorted, corrupted, manipulated, permeated and undermined any number of otherwise sensible and reasonable aspects of our civilization, it would scarcely be possible to undo the damage that had already been done at a event where, as Mrs. Trilling puts it, "everybody in the audience had been whooping and cheering all evening, and the yells and shouts had been full of obscenities." In a theatre or on television, debate about the merits of feminism is, necessarily, going to languish beneath the weight of irrelevant side issues, until the irrelevant side issues—moth-eaten fox fur, floral love tokens, cups full of weird liquid, trade unionists in slacks suits with big gold embroidery, on-stage flirtation, upstaging of participants, klieg lights, shouted obscenities and three lesbians rolling around on the stage—displace the point so thoroughly as to thereby make themselves the unreasoning point.

For this reason, in debating the merits of feminism all such theatrical environments need to be avoided like the plague. When—not if—we at last manage to bring those parts of the edifice of feminism which are false crashing to the earth it will be accomplished through that lucid, sequential exposition of ideas which can only be achieved on paper and—given the propensity of feminists for meaningless digression, character assassination, and irrelevant anecdotal evidence—it will require a great deal of paper indeed. Had Norman Mailer addressed Germaine Greer, Diana Trilling and Jill Johnston on paper at whatever length was required to make his case and had they responded in a like fashion, at whatever length was required to mount a defense of their movement, and had that exchange gone on for a year or two years, there is a good chance that we would not still be discussing (as if there was some logical foundation for doing so) such fatuous absurdities as how society must make it possible for women to devote themselves to a 70-hour a week career *and* be devoted wives *and* do as effective a job in rearing their children as full-time mothers, without once considering why it should be the obligation of society in general or any part of society (outside of the two-person psychosis-in-tandem entity called a marriage) to even consider such Alice Through the Looking Glass delusions, let alone how to implement them on a trial basis, let alone how to make them a new taxpayer-funded societal norm.

The literary vehicles of leftist rhetoric—and I have yet to read anywhere a more thorough and accurate description of what passes for debate on the left than that enunciated above by Mr. Feiffer—need, likewise, to be avoided. There will be more than sufficient difficulty in demonstrating to the Marxist-feminists the extent to which they have built and are building their delusional castle on equally delusional sand without compounding the difficulty by

allowing them to hide, chameleon-like, against the backdrop of those who have yet to be convinced to their complete satisfaction that Josef Stalin was, in actual fact, a totalitarian, genocide-committing dictator. (Yes, yes, it's true, leftists! He was! He really, really was!). Where the perverse pseudo-intellectual evasion of self-evident reality is the norm, feminism will always be able to "fit right in" perpetuating, with impunity, its own self-deceptions and glossing over its own transparent inconsistencies.

If it is true (and I can't think of any serious person who would doubt it) that the colour barrier in Major League Baseball existed to the detriment of that sport up until the post-1947 desegregation, I think it is equally true that denying women the opportunity to participate in the workforce, at all levels of the workforce, was detrimental to the best interests of our society prior to World War II. But, just as, by 1977, there could be no question that there was full equality *of opportunity* in Major League Baseball, so I believe it is naïve to hold the view that, thirty years after the first onset of feminism, there exists anything other than full equality of *opportunity* for women. But equality of *opportunity* should never be mistaken for equality of *outcome*, nor can equality of *opportunity* be supplanted by mandated numerical parity—quotas—or "improved opportunities" for women. For as George Jonas pointed out, you can't "improve opportunities" for one group without "worsening opportunities" for another group. Absolute fairness is an impossible goal. People are imperfect. A human resources manager, delegated to his (or her) task by a large company, is going to have a lot of apples and oranges to consider in the course of hiring any individual for whatever task. Person A may have five attributes in common with all of the other candidates and two more that are his (or hers) alone. Person B may have those same five attributes and two attributes different from those of Person A that are his (or hers) alone. All of the candidates may be black, or they may all be men. Maybe only one of them is a man. If the human resources manager is a woman, the odds are pretty good that the decision, if there is an interview involved, will hinge in no small part on which candidate she got the best "feeling" from, which candidate she "liked" the best. If I think this is a shoddy basis on which to decide employment (and I do, very much believe it to be a shoddy basis on which to decide employment), this, too, is a free will decision, on the part of her employer. In an imperfect world, all employment on the basis of merit can only be *perceived* merit. "I think this is the right person for the job." If the human resource manager's last ten choices have all been bad, it is *that* that should decided whether he (or she) should be fired or not. But that too is—or should be—an employer's free will choice. If he or she firmly believes that staffing of 50% women, 50% men supersedes all other criteria and is the cornerstone on which he or she intends to build his or her company, it is—or should be—his or her choice to risk his or her company on the basis of that choice.

I don't mean to carve anything in stone, just to point out that I believe the Annika Sondestrom Effect holds true and that, if we persist in trying to manufacture out of whole cloth a one-to-one ratio of men-to-women at all levels of the workforce and if we persist in imposing upon others that unnatural structure in the name of ideology, in the name of our own perceptions of fairness, then I think we do so, ultimately, to the detriment of even those women who are able to achieve and are actually equal to or superior to their colleagues, by making the inescapable, primary reason that they hold their positions—as the poor senior liberal on the finance committee was told after years of faithful service and being bypassed for a promotion he deserved—"we need more women." Or, like the women of Jean Chrétien's cabinet who, literally, can't be demoted to the backbenches no matter how shoddy their performances because there aren't enough of them to fill the UN's ideological quota as it is.

The days are long gone when a woman would be automatically disqualified for a job because of her gender. And that's only right. To the best of their ability, anyone hiring and firing would do well to be as blind to gender as they are to blind to skin colour. I do think that more consideration should be given to whether or not a woman intends to have children or whether or not she has children if she is applying for a job, in the same way that it should count against a man applying for a job if he has some obvious large claim on his time. Say, self-publishing a comic book. I don't say that they shouldn't be hired, but I would think it sensible that someone willing and capable of giving 100% of their working time attention to a job should get preference over someone who is going to treat the job as something in between a job and a hobby and it should be entirely justifiable grounds for dismissal to say, "She spent too much working time on family stuff," as it would be to say, "He was always working on his comic book." It doesn't mean that she shouldn't spend a lot of time on her family, and it doesn't mean he shouldn't always be working on his comic book, but it does (or I think should) mean that, in the employer's view, they weren't suited to the job for that reason, and that should be sufficient grounds for dismissal or for choosing not to hire them in the first place.

The reason that I chose to announce publicly that I am not a feminist, to actively oppose feminism and to, thereby, destroy my personal reputation and to dramatically curtail my career in the comic-book field (and I went into it with my eyes open, knowing exactly what the net effect would be) is because I knew that feminism presents a watershed moment in human history, implying a choice: to carry on the way we had, always, at the apex of our civilization, in pursuit of excellence both personal and collective, or we could turn our backs on excellence and choose instead to embrace mediocrity. The former course (and the fact that we have largely abandoned it) I think explains why men's interest in sports has soared since the onset of feminism (coverage of Canada's front-page-72-pt.-headline-and-colour-photo-gold-medal win at the Olympics in ice hockey was contrasted with the last Canadian gold medal win in 1952 which was, appropriately, confined to a quarter- page article on the second page of the sports section). In a world which seeks to make the male and female worlds interchangeable, to ignore the Annika Sorenstam Effect, to manipulate reality so as to reinforce the view that #97 can make the top ten any other way than by dragging down the top 100, the only place you are going to find certifiable excellence is in professional sports.

It becomes the only venue of irrefutable achievement-based-on-merit. And the added attention only multiplies the effect: narrowing the field even further by making it necessary to be able to perform under pressure, under the added weight of *being* the last outpost of irrefutable-achievement-based-on-merit. If you are playing the New York Yankees as often as you are going to in the American League East division, you can't afford to put anyone on the field you don't think is your absolute best hope out of your team's entire organization to play first base, shortstop or right field. And if you're chosen you had better be able to deliver the goods night after night in exactly that exponentially hotter pressure cooker that the game has become.

My point is that Marxist-feminists have corrupted so much by not understanding the quantum difference between "equality of opportunity" and "equality of outcome," so manipulating all ground rules and criteria, standards and measurements that the only place anyone expects to find excellence these days is in professional sports, that all other environments are mere objects of rhetorical, ideology-based lip service. We are told which female directors are making movies as good or better than their male counterparts and are forced to pay lip service to the liberal ideal that agreeing represents, irrespective of what we actually think of the movies in question. We are told that women are writing books as good or better than those written by their male counterparts and are forced to pay lip service to the liberal ideal that agreeing represents. But, except for professional sports, for men, the air has gone out of the societal balloon and all we can do is watch the Marxist-feminists and their hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husbands going "Ooh look at this one" and hurling aloft—or attempting to hurl aloft—yet another sagging, wrinkled and leaking bag of rhetorical, ideology-based wind. Or *not* watch, more to the point. It really does take a hollowed-out ventriloquist puppet husband to keep a straight face while agreeing that Drew Barrymore, by purchasing through her production company the film rights to *Charlie's Angels* and building a brainless, action film franchise out of that "property," really, really has built upon the feminist foundations of...whom? Farrah Fawcett-Majors? If I remember correctly, Farrah Fawcett-Majors in her day was considered to be the *problem* by Marxist-feminists. Has the stone rejected by the feminist builders become the head of the corner?

Huh? Oh. Whatever.

Until we abandon our misguided notions of numerical parity between the genders, until we stop exalting every female "first" as some dazzling societal victory and (more perniciously) so long as we continue to eliminate, marginalize and ignore most of the top 100 so we can trumpet and champion #97 ahead of everyone else, we are condemned as a society to mediocrity as our highest level of achievement. In abandoning excellence as an ideal, we abandon it as a possibility. And once abandoned as both an ideal and a possibility, we lose sight of it as a concept. And once lost to us as a concept...well, go channel-surfing tonight and see the results for yourself. Mediocrity. Mediocrity feeding on itself. Mediocrity as our highest ambition. Mediocrity as non-ambition. Mediocrity as a means of shifting smaller and smaller piles of currency from one location to another.

Norman Mailer claimed that his hair turned white overnight after the Theatre for Ideas evening. I have no doubt. If the Marxist-feminists won a great victory that night with little more on their side than Germaine Greer's fox fur and Jill Johnston's lesbian "performance art," the way had been opened for mediocrity to overcome and surpass excellence. Thirty years later, that society-wide—except for professional sports—scenario continues to unfold. I'll flatter myself that, with the success of 'Tangent" (and having, two years later and counting, still no refutation by any woman of the piece itself, nor its cornerstone, the Sixteen Impossible Things to Believe Before Breakfast, I feel safe in calling it a complete success)—and what I imagine will be the ultimate success of this final installment of "Why Canada Slept"—perhaps a mortal blow has been struck against the Marxist-feminist dinosaur. Like its real world counterpart, its sheer size might mean that it thrashes on for another decade or so, until the message finally reaches its diminutive brain that it is dead and has been dead for some time. But...and this is my final word of caution to you, whoever you are, wherever you are, whenever you are reading these words...we must, at all costs, avoid wishful thinking of that kind. Before I severed personal contact—I'll read them, voraciously, but I won't connect with them personally—Marxist-feminists had been telling me (for years!) that things were getting better, that women aren't "like that" anymore, that there's no point in continuing to fight them, because, really, I've already won.

It isn't just that these transparent attempts at deception are in themselves galling—the feminist faith that if one just says a thing definitively enough that it will be so and that everyone will just nod and agree (see the Anne Kingston and Beverly McLachlin examples cited above)—what is even more galling is the extent to which it *works*, the complete nonsense that men will agree with *and believe* in order to get laid and husbands will agree with *and believe* to avoid making their wives angry: ignoring the fact that, cumulatively, each transgression of reality, however minor, which is made in the name of these unworthy motives leads us, as a society, step-by-step, away from reality, into the Alice Kicks Ass in Wonderland world. If that world *was* populated with *genuinely* superhumanly intelligent and competent women, that would be fine. But it isn't. And when that gender that *does* perceive reality accurately has been lured deeper and deeper into unreality for three decades, *the rules of reality* still apply. You can't just click your heels together three times and say, "I want to go home." Reality is men's "post," in the military sense. Abandoning your post is the worst form of dereliction of duty.

My theory—and you're the only one who will understand that it's a good deal more than a theory—is that *someone* has to know where and what reality is. And stay put. I see that as a big part of my job. Whoever you are, it will, one day, be your job as well. "And," as King Arthur said in *Camelot,* "May...*God*...have mercy on us all."

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